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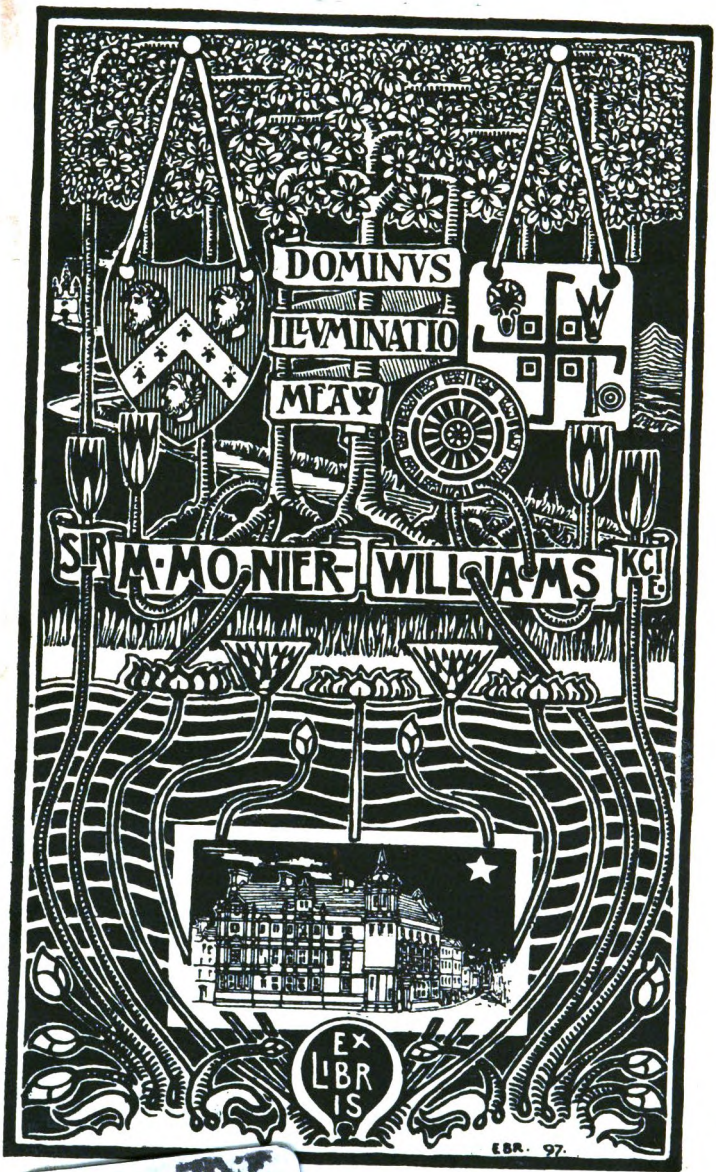

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

The Knowledge which the *Ancients* had of

INDIA;

AND THE

PROGRESS of TRADE with that COUNTRY prior to the Diſcovery of the Paſſage to it by the *CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.*

With an APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

Obſervations on the Civil Policy—the Laws and Judicial Proceedings—the Arts—the Sciences—and Religious Inſtitutions, of the *INDIANS.*

By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D. F.R.S. Ed.
PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY, AND HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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PREFACE.

THE perusal of Major Rennell's Memoir for illustrating his Map of Indostan, one of the most valuable geographical treatises that has appeared in any age or country, gave rise to the following work. It suggested to me the idea of examining more fully than I had done in the Introductory Book to my History of America, into the knowledge which the Ancients had of India, and of considering what is certain, what is obscure, and what is fabulous, in the accounts of that country which they have handed down to us. In undertaking this inquiry, I had originally no other object than my own amusement and instruction: But in carrying it on, and consulting with diligence the authors of antiquity, some facts, hitherto unobserved, and many which had not been examined with proper attention, occurred; new views opened; my ideas gradually extended and became more interesting; until, at length, I imagined that the result of my researches might prove amusing and instructive to others, by exhibiting such a view of the various modes in

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which intercourſe with India had been carried on from the earlieſt times, as might ſhew how much that great branch of commerce has contributed, in every age, to increaſe the wealth and power of the nations which poſſeſſed it.

THUS the Hiſtorical Diſquiſition which I now lay before the Reader was begun and completed. What degree of merit it poſſeſſes, the Public muſt determine. My grateful recollection of the favourable manner in which my other works have been received, naturally increaſes the ſolicitude with which I wait for its deciſion concerning this which I now publiſh.

WHEN I firſt turned my thoughts to this ſubject, I was ſo fully aware of the diſadvantage under which I laboured in undertaking to deſcribe countries of which I had not any local knowledge, that I have been at the utmoſt pains to guard againſt any errors which this might occaſion. I have conſulted, with perſevering induſtry, the works of all the authors I could procure, who have given any account of India; I have never formed any decided opinion, which was not ſupported by reſpectable authority; and as I have the good fortune to reckon among the number of my friends ſome Gentlemen who have filled important ſtations, civil and military, in

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India, and who have visited many different parts of it, I had recourse frequently to them, and from their conversation learned things which I could not have found in books. Were it proper to mention their names, the Public would allow that by their discernment and abilities they are fully entitled to the confidence which I have placed in them.

In the progress of the work, I became sensible of my own deficiency with respect to another point. In order to give an accurate idea of the imperfection both of the theory and practice of navigation among the Ancients, and to explain, with scientific precision, the manner in which they ascertained the position of places, and calculated their longitude and latitude, a greater portion of mathematical knowledge was requisite, than my attention to other studies had permitted me to acquire. What I wanted, the friendship of my ingenious and respectable Colleague, Mr. Playfair, Professor of Mathematics, has supplied; and I have been enabled by him to elucidate all the points I have mentioned, in a manner which, I am confident, will afford my Readers complete satisfaction. To him, likewise, I am indebted for the construction of two maps necessary for illustrating this Disquisition, which without his assistance I could not have undertaken.

I HAVE

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I HAVE adhered, in this work, to an arrangement I followed in my former compositions, and to which the Public has been long accustomed. I have kept historical narrative as much separate as possible from scientific and critical discussions, by reserving the latter for Notes and Illustrations. I flatter myself that I may claim, without presumption, the merit of having examined with diligence what I submit to public inspection, and of having referred, with scrupulous accuracy, to the authors from whom I have derived information.

College of EDINBURGH,
May 10th, 1791.

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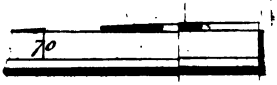

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION I.

Intercourse with India, from the earliest Times, until the Conquest of Egypt by the Romans.

SECT. I.

WHOEVER attempts to trace the operations of men in remote times, and to mark the various steps of their progress in any line of exertion, will soon have the mortification to find, that the period of authentic history is extremely limited. It is little more than three thousand years since the Books of Moses, the most ancient and only genuine record of what passed in the early ages of the world, were composed. Herodotus, the most ancient Heathen historian whose works have reached us, flourished a thousand

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years later. If we puſh our inquiries concerning any point beyond the æra where written hiſtory commences, we enter upon the region of conjecture, of fable, and of uncertainty. Upon that ground I will neither venture myſelf, nor endeavour to conduct my readers. In my reſearches concerning the intercourſe between the Eaſtern and Weſtern regions of the earth, and concerning the progreſs of that great branch of trade, which, in every age, has contributed ſo conſpicuouſly towards raiſing the people who carried it on, to wealth and power, I ſhall confine myſelf within the precincts I have marked out. Wherever the inſpired writers, intent upon higher objects, mention occaſionally any circumſtance that tends to illuſtrate the ſubject of my inquiries, I ſhall attend to it with reverence. Whatever other writers relate, I ſhall examine with freedom, and endeavour to aſcertain the degree of credit to which they are entitled.

THE original ſtation allotted to man by his Creator, was in the mild and fertile regions of the Eaſt. There the human race began its career of improvement; and from the remains of ſciences which were anciently cultivated, as well as of arts which were anciently exerciſed in India, we may conclude it to be one of the firſt countries in which men made any conſiderable

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siderable progress in that career. The wisdom of the East was early celebrated [a], and its productions were early in request among distant nations [b]. The intercourse, however, between different countries was carried on at first entirely by land. As the people of the East appear soon to have acquired complete dominion over the useful animals [c], they could early undertake the long and toilsome journies which it was necessary to make, in order to maintain this intercourse; and by the provident bounty of Heaven, they were furnished with a beast of burden, without whose aid it would have been impossible to accomplish them. The Camel, by its persevering strength, by its moderation in the use of food, and the singularity of its internal structure, which enables it to lay in a stock of water sufficient for several days, put it in their power to convey bulky commodities through those deserts, which must be traversed by all who travel from any of the countries west of the Euphrates towards India. Trade was carried on in this manner, particularly by the nations near to the Arabian Gulf, from the earliest period to which historical information reaches. Distant journies, however, would be undertaken at first only

[a] 1 Kings, iv. 30. [b] Gen. xxxvii. 25.
[c] Gen. xii. 16. xxiv. 10, 11.

 occasionally,

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occasionally, and by a few adventurers. But by degrees, from attention to their mutual safety and comfort, numerous bodies of merchants assembled at stated times, and forming a temporary association, (known afterwards by the name of a Caravan,) governed by officers of their own choice, and subject to regulations of which experience had taught them the utility, they performed journies of such extent and duration, as appear astonishing to nations not accustomed to this mode of carrying on commerce.

But, notwithstanding every improvement that could be made in the manner of conveying the productions of one country to another by land, the inconveniencies which attended it were obvious and unavoidable. It was often dangerous; always expensive, and tedious, and fatiguing. A method of communication more easy and expeditious was sought, and the ingenuity of man gradually discovered, that the rivers, the arms of the sea, and even the ocean itself, were destined to open and facilitate intercourse with the various regions of the earth, between which they appear, at first view, to be placed as insuperable barriers. Navigation, however, and ship-building, (as I have observed in another work [d],) are arts so nice and

[d] Hist. of America, vol. i. p. 2.

compli-

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complicated, that they require the talents as well as experience of many ſucceſſive ages, to bring them to any degree of perfection. From the raft or canoe, which firſt ſerved to carry a ſavage over the river that obſtructed him in the chace, to the conſtruction of a veſſel capable of conveying a numerous crew, or a conſiderable cargo of goods, to a diſtant coaſt, the progreſs of improvement is immenſe. Many efforts would be made, many experiments would be tried, and much labour as well as ingenuity would be employed, before this arduous and important undertaking could be accompliſhed.

EVEN after ſome improvement was made in ſhip-building, the intercourſe of nations with each other by ſea was far from being extenſive. From the accounts of the earlieſt hiſtorians, we learn, that navigation made its firſt efforts in the Mediterranean and the Arabian Gulf, and in them the firſt active operations of commerce were carried on. From an attentive inſpection of the poſition and form of theſe two great inland ſeas, theſe accounts appear to be highly probable. Theſe ſeas lay open the continents of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, and ſpreading to a great extent along the coaſts of the moſt fertile and moſt early civilized countries in each, ſeem to have been deſtined by nature

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SECT. I.

to facilitate their communication with one another. We find, accordingly, that the firſt voyages of the Egyptians and Phenicians, the moſt ancient navigators mentioned in hiſtory, were made in the Mediterranean. Their trade, however, was not long confined to the countries bordering upon it. By acquiring early poſſeſſion of ports on the Arabian Gulf, they extended the ſphere of their commerce, and are repreſented as the firſt people of the Weſt who opened a communication by ſea with India.

In that account of the progreſs of navigation and diſcovery which I prefixed to the Hiſtory of America, I conſidered with attention the maritime operations of the Egyptians and Phenicians; a brief review of them here, as far as they relate to their connection with India, is all that is requiſite for illuſtrating the ſubject of my preſent inquiries. With reſpect to the former of theſe people, the information which hiſtory affords is ſlender, and of doubtful authority. The fertile ſoil and mild climate of Egypt produced the neceſſaries and comforts of life in ſuch profuſion, as to render its inhabitants ſo independent of other countries, that it became early an eſtabliſhed maxim in their policy, to renounce all intercourſe with foreigners. In conſequence of this, they held all ſea-faring perſons in deteſtation,

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teſtation, as impious and profane; and fortifying their harbours, they denied ſtrangers admiſſion into them [e]. SECT. I.

THE enterpriſing ambition of Seſoſtris, diſdaining the reſtraints impoſed upon it by theſe contracted ideas of his ſubjects, prompted him to render the Egyptians a commercial people; and in the courſe of his reign he ſo completely accompliſhed this, that (if we may give credit to ſome Hiſtorians) he was able to fit out a fleet of four hundred ſhips in the Arabian Gulf, which conquered all the countries ſtretching along the Erythrean ſea to India. At the ſame time, his army, led by himſelf, marched through Aſia, and ſubjected to his dominion every part of it as far as to the banks of the Ganges; and croſſing that river, advanced to the Eaſtern Ocean [f]. But theſe efforts produced no permanent effect, and appear to have been ſo contrary to the genius and habits of the Egyptians, that, on the death of Seſoſtris, they reſumed their ancient maxims, and many ages elapſed before the commercial connection of

[e] Diodor. Sicul. lib. i. p. 78. edit. Weſſelingi. Amſt. 1746. Strab. Geog. lib. xvii. p. 1142. A. edit. Caſaub. Amſt. 1707. [f] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 64.

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SECT. I. Egypt with India came to be of such importance as to merit any notice in this Diſquiſition [1].

THE hiſtory of the early maritime operations of Phenicia are not involved in the ſame obſcurity with thoſe of Egypt. Every circumſtance in the character and ſituation of the Phenicians was favourable to the commercial ſpirit. The territory which they poſſeſſed was neither large nor fertile. It was from commerce only that they could derive either opulence or power. Accordingly, the trade carried on by the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre, was extenſive and adventurous; and, both in their manners and policy, they reſemble the great commercial ſtates of modern times, more than any people in the ancient world. Among the various branches of their commerce, that with India may be regarded as one of the moſt conſiderable and moſt lucrative. As by their ſituation on the Mediterranean, and the imperfect ſtate of navigation, they could not attempt to open a direct communication with India by ſea; the enterprizing ſpirit of commerce prompted them to wreſt from the Idumæans ſome commodious harbours towards the bottom of the Arabian Gulf. From theſe they held a regular intercourſe

[1] See NOTE I. at the end of the Volume.

with

with India on the one hand, and with the Eaſtern and Southern coaſts of Africa on the other. The diſtance, however, from the Arabian Gulf to Tyre was conſiderable, and rendered the conveyance of goods to it by land carriage ſo tedious and expenſive, that it became neceſſary for them to take poſſeſſion of Rhinocolura, the neareſt port in the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf. Thither all the commodities brought from India were conveyed over land by a route much ſhorter, and more practicable, than that by which the productions of the Eaſt were carried at a ſubſequent period from the oppoſite ſhore of the Arabian Gulf to the Nile[b]. At Rhinocolura they were reſhipped, and tranſported by an eaſy navigation to Tyre, and diſtributed through the world. This, as it is the earlieſt route of communication with India of which we have any authentic deſcription, had ſo many advantages over any ever known before the modern diſcovery of a new courſe of navigation to the Eaſt, that the Phenicians could ſupply other nations with the productions of India in greater abundance, and at a cheaper rate, than any people of antiquity. To this circumſtance, which, for a conſiderable time, ſecured to them a monopoly of that

SECT. I.

[b] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 70. Strab. lib. xvi. p. 1128. A.

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SECT. I.

trade, was owing, not only the extraordinary wealth of individuals, which rendered the "merchants of Tyre, Princes, and her traffickers the Honourable of the Earth [i];" but the extenſive power of the ſtate itſelf, which firſt taught mankind to conceive what vaſt reſources a commercial people poſſeſs, and what great exertions they are capable of making [k].

THE Jews, by their vicinity to Tyre, had ſuch an opportunity of obſerving the wealth which flowed into that city from the lucrative commerce carried on by the Phenicians from their ſettlements on the Arabian Gulf, as incited them to aim at obtaining ſome ſhare of it. This they effected under the proſperous reigns of David and Solomon, partly by the conqueſts which they made of a ſmall diſtrict in the land of Edom, that gave them poſſeſſion of the harbours of Elath and Eſiongeber on the Red Sea, and partly by the friendſhip of Hiram, king of Tyre; who enabled Solomon to fit out fleets, which, under the direction of Phenician pilots, ſailed to Tarſhiſh and Ophir [l]. In what region of the earth we ſhould ſearch for theſe famous ports which furniſhed the navy of

[i] Iſaiah, xxiii. 8.
[l] 1 Kings, ix. 26. x. 22.

[k] See NOTE II.

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Solomon with the various commodities enumerated by the ſacred hiſtorians, is an inquiry that has long exerciſed the induſtry of learned men. They were early ſuppoſed to be ſituated in ſome part of India, and the Jews were held to be one of the nations which traded with that country. But the opinion more generally adopted is, that Solomon's fleets, after paſſing the ſtraits of Babelmandeb, held their courſe along the ſouth-weſt coaſt of Africa, as far as the kingdom of Sofala, a country celebrated for its rich mines of gold and ſilver, (from which it has been denominated the Golden Sofala by Oriental writers [m],) and abounding in all the other articles which compoſed the cargoes of the Jewiſh ſhips. This opinion, which the accurate reſearches of M. D'Anville rendered highly probable [n], ſeems now to be eſtabliſhed with the utmoſt certainty by a late learned traveller; who, by his knowledge of the monſoons in the Arabian Gulf, and his attention to the ancient mode of navigation, both in that ſea and along the African coaſt, has not only accounted for the extraordinary length of time which the fleets of Solomon took in going and returning, but has ſhewn, from circumſtances mentioned con-

[m] Notices des MSS. du Roi, tom. ii. p. 40.

[n] Diſſert. ſur le Pays d'Ophir, Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 83, &c.

cerning

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cerning the voyage, that it was not made to any place in India [o]. The Jews, then, we may conclude, have no title to be reckoned among the nations which carried on intercourſe with India by ſea; and if, from deference to the ſentiments of ſome reſpectable authors, their claim were to be admitted, we know with certainty, that the commercial effort which they made in the reign of Solomon was merely a tranſient one, and that they quickly returned to their former ſtate of unſocial ſecluſion from the reſt of mankind.

FROM collecting the ſcanty information which hiſtory affords, concerning the moſt early attempts to open a commercial intercourſe with India, I now proceed, with more certainty and greater confidence, to trace the progreſs of communication with that country, under the guidance of authors who recorded events nearer to their own times, and with reſpect to which, they had received more full and accurate intelligence.

THE firſt eſtabliſhment of any foreign power in India, which can be aſcertained by evidence meriting any degree of credit, is that of the Perſians; and even of this we have only a very

[o] Bruce's Travels, book ii. ch. 4.

general

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general and doubtful account. Darius, the ſon of Hyſtaſpes, though raiſed to the throne of Perſia by chance or by artifice, poſſeſſed ſuch active and enterprizing talents, as rendered him worthy of that high ſtation. He examined the different provinces of his kingdom more diligently than any of his predeceſſors, and explored regions of Aſia formerly little known [p]. Having ſubjected to his dominion many of the countries which ſtretched ſouth-eaſt from the Caſpian ſea towards the river Oxus, his curioſity was excited to acquire a more extenſive and accurate knowledge of India, on which they bordered. With this view he appointed Scylax of Caryandra to take the command of a ſquadron fitted out at Caſpatyrus, in the country of Pactya, [the modern Pehkely,] towards the upper part of the navigable courſe of the river Indus, and to fall down its ſtream until he ſhould reach the ocean. This Scylax performed, though it ſhould ſeem with much difficulty, and notwithſtanding many obſtacles; for he ſpent no leſs than two years and ſix months in conducting his ſquadron from the place where he embarked, to the Arabian Gulf [q]. The account which he gave of the populouſneſs, fertility, and high cultivation of that region of India through which his courſe lay, rendered Darius impatient

SECT. I.

[p] Herodot. lib. iv. c. 44. [q] Ibid. c. 42. 44.

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SECT. I.

to become master of a country so valuable. This he soon accomplished; and though his conquests in India seem not to have extended beyond the district watered by the Indus, we are led to form an high idea of its opulence, as well as of the number of its inhabitants, in ancient times, when we learn that the tribute which he levied from it was near a third part of the whole revenue of the Persian monarchy [r]. But neither this voyage of Scylax, nor the conquests of Darius, to which it gave rise, diffused any general knowledge of India. The Greeks, who were the only enlightened race of men at that time in Europe, paid but little attention to the transactions of the people whom they considered as Barbarians, especially in countries far remote from their own; and Scylax had embellished the narrative of his voyage with so many circumstances manifestly fabulous [s], that he seems to have met with the just punishment to which persons who have a notorious propensity to what is marvellous are often subjected, of being listened to with distrust, even when they relate what is exactly true.

About an hundred and sixty years after the reign of Darius Hystaspes, Alexander the Great

[r] Herod. lib. iii. c. 90—96. See NOTE III.

[s] Philostr. Vita Apoll. lib. iii. c. 47. and Note 3d of Olearius Tzetzet. Chiliad. vii. vers. 630.

undertook

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undertook his expedition into India. The wild sallies of paſſion, the indecent exceſſes of intemperance, and the oſtentatious diſplays of vanity too frequent in the conduct of this extraordinary man, have ſo degraded his character, that the pre-eminence of his merit, either as a conqueror, a politician, or a legiſlator, has ſeldom been juſtly eſtimated. The ſubject of my preſent inquiry leads me to conſider his operations only in one light, but it will enable me to exhibit a ſtriking view of the grandeur and extent of his plans. He ſeems, ſoon after his firſt ſucceſſes in Aſia, to have formed the idea of eſtabliſhing an univerſal monarchy, and aſpired to the dominion of the ſea, as well as of the land. From the wonderful efforts of the Tyrians in their own defence, when left without any ally or protector, he conceived an high opinion of the reſources of maritime power, and of the wealth to be derived from commerce, eſpecially that with India, which he found engroſſed by the citizens of Tyre. With a view to ſecure this commerce, and to eſtabliſh a ſtation for it, preferable in many reſpects to that of Tyre, as ſoon as he completed the conqueſt of Egypt, he founded a city near one of the mouths of the Nile, which he honoured with his own name; and with ſuch admirable diſcernment was the ſituation of it choſen, that Alexandria ſoon became the greateſt trading city in the ancient

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SECT. I.

world; and, notwithſtanding many ſucceſſive revolutions in empire, continued, during eighteen centuries, to be the chief ſeat of commerce with India [t]. Amidſt the military operations to which Alexander was ſoon obliged to turn his attention, the deſire of acquiring the lucrative commerce which the Tyrians had carried on with India, was not relinquiſhed. Events ſoon occurred, that not only confirmed and added ſtrength to this deſire, but opened to him a proſpect of obtaining the ſovereignty of thoſe regions which ſupplied the reſt of mankind with ſo many precious commodities.

AFTER his final victory over the Perſians, he was led in purſuit of the laſt Darius, and of Beſſus, the murderer of that unfortunate monarch, to traverſe that part of Aſia which ſtretches from the Caſpian ſea beyond the river Oxus. He advanced towards the eaſt as far as Maracanda [u], then a city of ſome note, and deſtined, in a future period, under the modern name of Samarcand, to be the capital of an empire not inferior to his own either in extent or in power. In a progreſs of ſeveral months through provinces hitherto unknown to the Greeks, in a line of march often approaching near to India, and among people accuſtomed to much inter-

[t] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 20.
[u] Arrian, iii. c. 30.

courſe

course with it, he learned many things concern- SECT. I.
ing the state of a country[x] that had been long the object of his thoughts and wishes[y], which increased his desire of invading it. Decisive and prompt in all his resolutions, he set out from Bactria, and crossed that ridge of mountains which, under various denominations, forms the Stony Girdle (if I may use an expression of the Oriental geographers) which encircles Asia, and constitutes the northern barrier of India.

THE most practicable avenue to every country, it is obvious, must be formed by circumstances in its natural situation, such as the defiles which lead through mountains, the course of rivers, and the places where they may be passed with the greatest ease and safety. In no place of the earth is this line of approach marked and defined more conspicuously, than on the northern frontier of India; insomuch that the three great invaders of this country, Alexander, Tamerlane, and Nadir Shah, in three distant ages, and with views and talents extremely different, advanced by the same route, with very little deviation. Alexander had the merit of having first discovered the way. After passing the mountains, he encamped at Alexandria Paropamisana, not far from the mountains de-

[x] Strabo, xv. p. 1021. A.
[y] Arrian, iv. c. 15.

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SECT. I. nominated the Indian Caucaſus by his hiſtorians, now known by the name of Hindoo Kho[z]; and having ſubdued, or conciliated the nations ſeated on the north-weſt bank of the Indus, he croſſed the river at Taxila, now Attock, where its ſtream is ſo tranquil that a bridge can be thrown over it with greater eaſe than at any other place[a].

AFTER paſſing the Indus, Alexander marched forward in the road which leads directly to the Ganges, and the opulent provinces to the ſouth-eaſt, now comprehended under the general name of Indoſtan. But, on the banks of the Hydaſpes, known in modern times by the name of the Betah or Chelum, he was oppoſed by Porus, a powerful monarch of the country, at the head of a numerous army. The war with Porus, and the hoſtilities in which he was ſucceſſively engaged with other Indian princes, led him to deviate from his original route, and to turn more towards the ſouth-weſt. In carrying on theſe operations, Alexander marched through one of the richeſt and beſt peopled countries of India, now called the Panjab, from the five

[z] In the ſecond edition of his Memoir, Major Rennell gives the modern names of the Hydaſpes, with ſome variation in their orthography, *Behut* and *Ihylam*.

[a] Rennell Mem. p. 92. See NOTE IV.

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great rivers by which it is watered; and as we know that this march was performed in the rainy ſeaſon, when even Indian armies cannot keep the field, it gives an high idea both of Alexander's perſevering ſpirit, and of the extraordinary vigour and hardineſs of conſtitution which ſoldiers, in ancient times, derived from the united effects of gymnaſtic exerciſe and military diſcipline. In every ſtep of his progreſs, objects no leſs ſtriking than new preſented themſelves to Alexander. The magnitude of the Indus, even after he had ſeen the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, muſt have filled him with ſurpriſe [b]. No country he had hitherto viſited was ſo populous and well cultivated, or abounded in ſo many valuable productions of nature and of art, as that part of India through which he had led his army. But when he was informed in every place, and probably with exaggerated deſcription, how much the Indus was inferior to the Ganges, and how far all that he had hitherto beheld was ſurpaſſed in the happy regions through which that great river flows, it is not wonderful that his eagerneſs to view and to take poſſeſſion of them ſhould have prompted him to aſſemble his ſoldiers, and to propoſe that they ſhould reſume their march towards that

SECT. I.

[b] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1027. C. & note 5. Cauſab.

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SECT. I.

quarter where wealth, dominion, and fame awaited them. But they had already done ſo much, and had ſuffered ſo greatly, eſpecially from inceſſant rains and extenſive inundations, that their patience as well as ſtrength were exhauſted [c], and with one voice they refuſed to advance farther. In this reſolution they perſiſted with ſuch ſullen obſtinacy, that Alexander, though poſſeſſed in the higheſt degree of every quality that gains an aſcendant over the minds of military men, was obliged to yield, and to iſſue orders for marching back to Perſia [d].

THE ſcene of this memorable tranſaction was on the banks of the Hyphaſis, the modern Beyah, which was the utmoſt limit of Alexander's progreſs in India. From this it is manifeſt, that he did not traverſe the whole extent of the Panjab. Its ſouth-weſt boundary is formed by a river anciently known by the name of Hyſudrus, and now by that of the Setlege, to which Alexander never approached nearer than the ſouthern bank of the Hyphaſis, where he erected twelve ſtupendous altars, which he intended as a monument of his exploits, and which (if we may believe the biographer of Apollonius Tyanæus) were ſtill remaining, with legible inſcrip-

[c] See NOTE V.

[d] Arrian, v. c. 24, 25.

tions,

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tions, when that fantaſtic ſophiſt viſited India, three hundred and ſeventy-three years after Alexander's expedition[e]. The breadth of the Panjab, from Ludhana on the Setlege to Attock on the Indus, is computed to be two hundred and fifty-nine geographical miles, in a ſtraight line; and Alexander's march, computed in the ſame manner, did not extend above two hundred miles. But, both as he advanced and returned, his troops were ſo ſpread over the country, and often acted in ſo many ſeparate diviſions, and all his movements were ſo exactly meaſured and delineated by men of ſcience, whom he kept in pay for the purpoſe, that he acquired a very extenſive and accurate knowledge of that part of India[f]. SECT. I.

When, upon his return, he reached the banks of the Hydaſpes, he found that the officers to whom he had given it in charge to build and collect as many veſſels as poſſible, had executed his orders with ſuch activity and ſucceſs that they had aſſembled a numerous fleet. As amidſt the hurry of war, and the rage of conqueſt, he never loſt ſight of his pacific and commercial ſchemes, the deſtination of this fleet was to ſail down the Indus to the ocean,

[e] Philoſtr. Vita Apollon. lib. ii. c. 43. edit. Olear. Lipſ. 1709.

[f] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.

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and from its mouth to proceed to the Perſian Gulf, that a communication by ſea might be opened with India and the centre of his dominions.

THE conduct of this expedition was committed to Nearchus, an officer equal to that important truſt. But as Alexander was ambitious to acquire fame of every kind, and fond of engaging in new and ſplendid undertakings, he himſelf accompanied Nearchus in his navigation down the river. The armament was, indeed, ſo great and magnificent, as deſerved to be commanded by the conqueror of Aſia. It was compoſed of an army of a hundred and twenty thouſand men, and two hundred elephants, and of a fleet of near two thouſand veſſels, various in burden and form[g]; on board of which one-third of the troops embarked, while the remainder marching in two diviſions, one on the right, and the other on the left, of the river, accompanied them in their progreſs. As they advanced, the nations on each ſide were either compelled or perſuaded to ſubmit. Retarded by the various operations in which this engaged him, as well as by the ſlow navigation of ſuch a fleet as he conducted, Alexander was above nine months before he reached the ocean[h].

[g] See NOTE VI.

[h] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1014.

ALEX-

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SECT. I.

ALEXANDER'S progreſs in India, in this line of direction, was far more conſiderable than that which he made by the route we formerly traced; and when we attend to the various movements of his troops, the number of cities which they took, and the different ſtates which they ſubdued, he may be ſaid not only to have viewed, but to have explored, the countries through which he paſſed. This part of India has been ſo little frequented by Europeans in later times, that neither the poſition of places, nor their diſtances, can be aſcertained with the ſame accuracy as in the interior provinces, or even in the Panjab. But from the reſearches of Major Rennell, carried on with no leſs diſcernment than induſtry, the diſtance of that place on the Hydaſpes, where Alexander fitted out his fleet from the ocean, cannot be leſs than a thouſand Britiſh miles. Of this extenſive region a conſiderable portion, particularly the upper Delta, ſtretching from the capital of the ancient Malli, now Moultan, to Patala, the modern Tatta, is diſtinguiſhed for its fertility and population [1].

SOON after he reached the ocean, Alexander, ſatisfied with having accompliſhed this arduous

[1] Rennell Mem. 68, &c.

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SECT. I. undertaking, led his army by land back to Perſia. The command of the fleet, with a conſiderable body of troops on board of it, he left to Nearchus, who, after a coaſting voyage of ſeven months, conducted it ſafely up the Perſian Gulf into the Euphrates [k].

In this manner did Alexander firſt open the knowledge of India to the people of Europe, and an extenſive diſtrict of it was ſurveyed with greater accuracy than could have been expected from the ſhort time he remained in that country. Fortunately an exact account, not only of his military operations, but of every thing worthy of notice in the countries where they were carried on, was recorded in the Memoirs or Journals of three of his principal officers, Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, Ariſtobulus, and Nearchus. The two former have not indeed reached our times, but it is probable that the moſt important facts which they contained are preſerved, as Arrian profeſſes to have followed them as his guides in his Hiſtory of the Expedition of Alexander [l]; a work which, though compoſed long after Greece had loſt its liberty, and in an age when genius and taſte were on the decline, is not unworthy the pureſt times of Attic literature.

[k] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE VII.

[l] Arrian, lib. i. in proëmio.

With

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With respect to the general state of India, we learn from these writers, that in the age of Alexander, though there was not established in it any powerful empire, resembling that which in modern times stretched its dominion from the Indus almost to Cape Comorin, it was even then formed into monarchies of considerable extent. The king of the Prasij was prepared on the banks of the Ganges to oppose the Macedonians, with an army of twenty thousand cavalry, two hundred thousand infantry, two thousand armed chariots, and a great number of elephants [m]. The territory of which Alexander constituted Porus the sovereign, is said to have contained seven distinct nations, and no fewer than two thousand towns [n]. Even in the most restricted sense that can be given to the vague indefinite appellations of *nations* and *towns*, an idea is conveyed of a very great degree of population. As the fleet sailed down the river, the country on each side was found to be in no respect inferior to that of which the government was committed to Porus.

It was likewise from the Memoirs of the same officers that Europe derived its first

[m] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232.
[n] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 2.

authentic

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authentic information concerning the climate, the ſoil, the productions, and the inhabitants of India; and in a country where the manners, the cuſtoms, and even the dreſs of the people are almoſt as permanent and invariable as the face of nature itſelf, it is wonderful how exactly the deſcriptions given by Alexander's officers delineate what we now behold in India, at the diſtance of two thouſand years. The ſtated change of ſeaſons, now known by the name of *Monſoons*; the periodical rains; the ſwelling of the rivers; the inundations which theſe occaſion; the appearance of the country during their continuance; are particularly mentioned and deſcribed. No leſs accurate are the accounts which they have given of the inhabitants, their delicate and ſlender form, their dark complexion, their black uncurled hair, their garments of cotton, their living entirely upon vegetable food, their diviſion into ſeparate tribes or *caſts*, the members of which never intermarry, the cuſtom of wives burning themſelves with their deceaſed huſbands, and many other particulars, in all which they perfectly reſemble the modern Hindoos. To enter into any detail with reſpect to theſe in this place would be premature; but as the ſubject, though curious and intereſting, will lead unavoidably into diſcuſſions not well ſuited to the nature of an

an hiſtorical work, I ſhall reſerve my ideas concerning it for an Appendix, to be annexed to this Diſquiſition; and hope they may contribute to throw ſome additional light upon the origin and nature of the commerce with India. SECT. I.

MUCH as the Weſtern world was indebted for its knowledge of India to the expedition of Alexander, it was only a ſmall portion of that vaſt continent which he explored. His operations did not extend beyond the modern province of Lahore, and the countries on the banks of the Indus from Moultan to the ſea. Theſe, however, were ſurveyed with that degree of accuracy which I have already deſcribed; and it is a circumſtance not unworthy of notice, that this diſtrict of India which Europeans firſt entered, and with which they were beſt acquainted in ancient times, is now leſs known than almoſt any part of that continent [o], neither commerce nor war, to which, in every age, geography is chiefly indebted for its improvement, having led any nation of Europe to frequent or explore it.

IF an untimely death had not put a period to the reign of the Macedonian hero, India, we

[o] Rennell Mem. 114.

have

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have reaſon to think, would have been more fully explored by the ancients, and the European dominion would have been eſtabliſhed there two thouſand years ſooner. When Alexander invaded India, he had ſomething more in view than a tranſient incurſion. It was his object to annex that extenſive and opulent country to his empire; and though the refractory ſpirit of his army obliged him, at that time, to ſuſpend the proſecution of his plan, he was far from relinquiſhing it. To exhibit a general view of the meaſures which he adopted for this purpoſe, and to point out their propriety and probable ſucceſs, is not foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will convey a more juſt idea than is uſually entertained, of the original genius and extent of political wiſdom which diſtinguiſhed this illuſtrious man.

WHEN Alexander became maſter of the Perſian empire, he early perceived, that with all the power of his hereditary dominions, re-inforced by the troops which the aſcendant he had acquired over the various ſtates of Greece might enable him to raiſe there, he could not hope to retain in ſubjection territories ſo extenſive and populous; that to render his authority ſecure and permanent, it muſt be eſtabliſhed in the affection of the nations which he had ſubdued,

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ſubdued, and maintained by their arms; and that in order to acquire this advantage, all diſtinctions between the victors and vanquiſhed muſt be aboliſhed, and his European and Aſiatic ſubjects muſt be incorporated, and become one people, by obeying the ſame laws, and by adopting the ſame manners, inſtitutions, and diſcipline.

LIBERAL as this plan of policy was, and well adapted to accompliſh what he had in view, nothing could be more repugnant to the ideas and prejudices of his countrymen. The Greeks had ſuch an high opinion of the pre-eminence to which they were raiſed by civilization and ſcience, that they ſeem hardly to have acknowledged the reſt of mankind to be of the ſame ſpecies with themſelves. To every other people they gave the degrading appellation of Barbarians, and, in conſequence of their own boaſted ſuperiority, they aſſerted a right of dominion over them, in the ſame manner (to uſe their own expreſſion) as the ſoul has over the body, and men have over irrational animals. Extravagant as this pretenſion may now appear, it found admiſſion, to the diſgrace of ancient philoſophy, into all the ſchools. Ariſtotle, full of this opinion, in ſupport of which he employs arguments more ſubtle than ſolid [p], adviſed Alex-

[p] Ariſtot. Polit. i. c. 3—7.

ander

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ander to govern the Greeks like ſubjects, and the Barbarians as ſlaves; to conſider the former as companions, the lattter as creatures of an inferior nature [q]. But the ſentiments of the pupil were more enlarged than thoſe of his maſter, and his experience in governing men taught the monarch what the ſpeculative ſcience of the philoſopher did not diſcover. Soon after the victory at Arbela, Alexander himſelf, and, by his perſuaſion, many of his officers, aſſumed the Perſian dreſs, and conformed to ſeveral of their cuſtoms. At the ſame time he encouraged the Perſian nobles to imitate the manners of the Macedonians, to learn the Greek language, and to acquire a reliſh for the beauties of the elegant writers in that tongue, which were then univerſally ſtudied and admired. In order to render the union more complete, he reſolved to marry one of the daughters of Darius, and choſe wives for a hundred of his principal officers in the moſt illuſtrious Perſian families. Their nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and feſtivity, and with high exultation of the conquered people. In imitation of them, above ten thouſand Macedonians of inferior rank married Perſian women, to each of whom Alexander

[q] Plut. de Fortuna Alex. Orat. i. p. 302. vol. vii. edit. Reiſke. Strabo, lib. i. p. 116. A.

gave

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gave nuptial preſents, as a teſtimony of his approbation of their conduct[r]. SECT. I.

But aſſiduouſly as Alexander laboured to unite his European and Aſiatic ſubjects by the moſt indiſſoluble ties, he did not truſt entirely to the ſucceſs of that meaſure for the ſecurity of his new conqueſts. In every province which he ſubdued, he made choice of proper ſtations, where he built and fortified cities, in which he placed garriſons, compoſed partly of ſuch of the natives as conformed to the Grecian manners and diſcipline, and partly of ſuch of his European ſubjects as were worn out with the fatigues of ſervice, and wiſhed for repoſe, and a permanent eſtabliſhment. Theſe cities were numerous, and ſerved not only as a chain of poſts to keep open the communication between the different provinces of his dominions, but as places of ſtrength to over-awe and curb the conquered people. Thirty thouſand of his new ſubjects, who had been diſciplined in theſe cities, and armed after the European faſhion, appeared before Alexander in Suſa, and were formed by him into that

[r] Arrian, lib. vii. c. 4. Plut. de Fort. Alex. p. 304. See NOTE VIII.

compact

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compact ſolid body of infantry, known by the name of the Phalanx, which conſtituted the ſtrength of a Macedonian army. But in order to ſecure entire authority over this new corps, as well as to render it more effective, he appointed that every officer in it entruſted with command, either ſuperior or ſubaltern, ſhould be European. As the ingenuity of mankind naturally has recourſe in ſimilar ſituations to the ſame expedients, the European powers, who now in their Indian territories employ numerous bodies of the natives in their ſervice, have, in forming the eſtabliſhment of theſe troops, adopted the ſame maxims; and, probably without knowing it, have modelled their battalions of Seapoys upon the ſame principles as Alexander did his Phalanx of Perſians.

THE farther Alexander puſhed his conqueſts from the banks of the Euphrates, which may be conſidered as the centre of his dominions, he found it neceſſary to build and to fortify a greater number of cities. Several of theſe to the Eaſt and South of the Caſpian ſea are mentioned by ancient authors; and in India itſelf, he founded two cities on the banks of the Hydaſpes, and a third on the Aceſines, both navigable rivers, which, after uniting their ſtreams, fall

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fall into the Indus[q]. From the choice of such situations, it is obvious that he intended, by means of these cities, to keep open a communication with India, not only by land, but by sea. It was chiefly with a view to the latter of these objects, (as I have already observed,) that he examined the navigation of the Indus with so much attention. With the same view, on his return to Susa, he, in person, surveyed the course of the Euphrates and Tigris, and gave directions to remove the cataracts or dams, with which the ancient monarchs of Persia, induced by a peculiar precept of their religion, which enjoined them to guard with the utmost care against defiling any of the elements, had constructed near the mouths of these rivers, in order to shut out their subjects from any access to the ocean[r]. By opening the navigation in this manner, he proposed, that the valuable commodities of India should be conveyed from the Persian Gulf into the interior parts of his Asiatic dominions, while by the Arabian Gulf they should be carried to Alexandria, and distributed to the rest of the world.

SECT. I.

[q] See NOTE IX.

[r] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 7. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 1074, &c. See NOTE X.

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GRAND and extenſive as theſe ſchemes were, the precautions employed, and the arrangements made for carrying them into execution, were ſo various and ſo proper, that Alexander had good reaſon to entertain ſanguine hopes of their proving ſucceſsful. At the time when the mutinous ſpirit of his ſoldiers obliged him to relinquiſh his operations in India, he was not thirty years of age complete. At this enterprizing period of life, a prince, of a ſpirit ſo active, perſevering, and indefatigable, muſt have ſoon found means to reſume a favourite meaſure on which he had been long intent. If he had invaded India a ſecond time, he would not, as formerly, have been obliged to force his way through hoſtile and unexplored regions, oppoſed at every ſtep by nations and tribes of Barbarians, whoſe names had never reached Greece. All Aſia, from the ſhores of the Ionian ſea to the banks of the Hyphaſis, would then have been ſubject to his dominion; and through that immenſe ſtretch of country he had eſtabliſhed ſuch a chain of cities, or fortified ſtations*, that his armies might have continued their march with ſafety, and have found a regular ſucceſſion of magazines provided for their ſubſiſtence. Nor

* See NOTE XI.

would

would it have been difficult for him to bring into the field forces ſufficient to have atchieved the conqueſt of a country ſo populous and extenſive as India. Having armed and diſciplined his ſubjects in the Eaſt like Europeans, they would have been ambitious to imitate and to equal their inſtructors, and Alexander might have drawn recruits, not from his ſcanty domains in Macedonia and Greece, but from the vaſt regions of Aſia, which, in every age, has covered the earth, and aſtoniſhed mankind with its numerous armies. When at the head of ſuch a formidable power he had reached the confines of India, he might have entered it under circumſtances very different from thoſe in his firſt expedition. He had ſecured a firm footing there, partly by means of the garriſons that he left in the three cities which he had built and fortified, and partly by his alliance with Taxiles and Porus. Theſe two Indian princes, won by Alexander's humanity and beneficence, which, as they were virtues ſeldom diſplayed in the ancient mode of carrying on war, excited of courſe an higher degree of admiration and gratitude, had continued ſteady in their attachment to the Macedonians. Re-inforced by their troops, and guided by their information as well as by the experience which he had acquired in his

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former campaigns, Alexander muſt have made rapid progreſs in a country, where every invader, from his time to the preſent age, has proved ſucceſsful.

But this and all his other ſplendid ſchemes were terminated at once by his untimely death. In conſequence of that, however, events took place, which illuſtrate and confirm the juſtneſs of the preceding ſpeculations and conjectures by evidence the moſt ſtriking and ſatisfactory. When that great empire, which the ſuperior genius of Alexander had kept united and in ſubjection, no longer felt his ſuperintending controul, it broke into pieces, and its various provinces were ſeized by his principal officers, and parcelled out among them. From ambition, emulation, and perſonal animoſity, they ſoon turned their arms againſt one another; and as ſeveral of the leaders were equally eminent for political abilities and for military ſkill, the conteſt was maintained long, and carried on with frequent viciſſitudes of fortune. Amidſt the various convulſions and revolutions which theſe occaſioned, it was found that the meaſures of Alexander for the preſervation of his conqueſts had been concerted with ſuch ſagacity, that, upon the final reſtoration of tranquillity, the Macedonian dominion continued

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SECT. I.

to be eſtabliſhed in every part of Aſia, and not one province had ſhaken off the yoke. Even India, the moſt remote of Alexander's conqueſts, quietly ſubmitted to Pytho the ſon of Agenor, and afterwards to Seleucus, who ſucceſſively obtained dominion over that part of Aſia. Porus and Taxiles, notwithſtanding the death of their benefactor, neither declined ſubmiſſion to the authority of the Macedonians, nor made any attempt to recover independence.

DURING the conteſts for power and ſuperiority among the ſucceſſors of Alexander, Seleucus, who, in every effort of enterpriſing ambition, was inferior to none of them, having rendered himſelf maſter of all the provinces of the Perſian empire comprehended under the name of Upper Aſia, conſidered thoſe countries of India, which had been ſubdued by Alexander, as belonging to that portion of the Macedonian empire of which he was now the ſovereign. Seleucus, like all the officers formed under Alexander, entertained ſuch high ideas of the advantages which might be derived from a commercial intercourſe with India, as induced him to march into that country, partly with a view of eſtabliſhing his own authority there, and partly in order to curb Sandracottus, who having lately acquired the

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SECT. I.

ſovereignty of the Praſij, a powerful nation on the banks of the Ganges, threatened to attack the Macedonians, whoſe Indian territories bordered on his dominions. Unfortunately, no account of this expedition, which ſeems to have been ſplendid and ſucceſsful, has reached our times. All we know of it is, that he advanced conſiderably beyond the utmoſt boundary of Alexander's progreſs in India [t], and would probably have proceeded much farther, if he had not been conſtrained to ſtop ſhort in his career in order to oppoſe Antigonus, who was preparing to invade his dominions at the head of a formidable army. Before he began his march towards the Euphrates, he concluded a treaty with Sandracottus; in conſequence of which, that monarch quietly retained the kingdom he had acquired. But the powers and poſſeſſions of the Macedonians ſeem to have remained unimpaired during the reign of Seleucus, which terminated forty-two years after the death of Alexander.

WITH a view of cultivating a friendly intercourſe with Sandracottus, Seleucus made choice of Megaſthenes, an officer, who, from his having accompanied Alexander in his expedition into India, had ſome knowledge of the ſtate of the

[t] See NOTE XII.

country,

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country, and the manners of its inhabitants, and sent him as his ambaſſador to Palibothra[w]. In this famous capital of the Praſij, ſituated on the banks of the Ganges, Megaſthenes reſided ſeveral years, and was probably the firſt European who ever beheld that mighty river, far ſuperior to any of the ancient continent in magnitude[x], and no leſs diſtinguiſhed by the fertility of the countries through which it flows. This journey of Megaſthenes to Palibothra made Europeans acquainted with a large extent of country, of which they had not hitherto any knowledge; for Alexander did not advance farther towards the ſouth-eaſt, than that part of the river Hydraotes or Raûvee, where the modern city of Lahore is ſituated, and Palibothra, the ſite of which, as it is a capital poſition in the geography of ancient India, I have inveſtigated with the utmoſt attention, appears to me the ſame with that of the modern city of Allahabad, at the confluence of the two great rivers, Jumna and Ganges[y]. As the road from Lahore to Allahabad runs through ſome of the moſt cultivated and opulent provinces of India, the more the country was explored the idea of its value roſe higher. Accordingly, what Megaſthenes obſerved during his progreſs to Pali-

SECT. I.

[w] Strabo, lib. ii. p. 121, &c. Arrian, Hiſt. Ind. paſſim.
[x] See NOTE XIII. [y] See NOTE XIV.

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SECT. I. bothra, and his reſidence there, made ſuch an impreſſion upon his own mind, as induced him to publiſh an ample account of India, in order to make his countrymen more thoroughly acquainted with its importance. From his writings the ancients ſeem to have derived almoſt all their knowledge of the interior ſtate of India, and from comparing the three moſt ample accounts of it, by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Arrian, they appear manifeſtly, from their near reſemblance, to be a tranſcript of his words. But, unfortunately, Megaſthenes was ſo fond of the marvellous, that he mingled with the truths which he related many extravagant fictions; and to him may be traced up the fabulous tales of men with ears ſo large that they could wrap themſelves up in them, of others with a ſingle eye, without mouths, without noſes, with long feet, and toes turned backwards, of people only three ſpans in height, of wild men with heads in the ſhape of a wedge, of ants as large as foxes that dug up gold, and many other things no leſs wonderful[z]. The extracts from his narrative which have been tranſmitted to us by Strabo, Arrian, and other writers, ſeem not to be entitled to credit, unleſs when they are ſupported by internal evidence, and confirmed by the teſtimony of other ancient

[z] Strabo, lib. xx. 1032. A. 1037. C.

authors,

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authors, or when they coincide with the experience of modern times. His account, however, of the dimenſions and geography of India, is curious and accurate. His deſcription of the power and opulence of the Praſij perfectly reſembles that which might have been given of ſome of the greater ſtates in the modern Indoſtan, before the eſtabliſhment of the Mahomedan or European power in India, and is conſonant to the accounts which Alexander had received concerning that people. He was informed, as has been already mentioned, that they were prepared to oppoſe him on the banks of the Ganges, with an army conſiſting of twenty thouſand cavalry, two hundred thouſand infantry, and two thouſand armed chariots[a]; and Megaſthenes relates, that he had an audience of Sandracottus in a place where he was encamped with an army of four hundred thouſand men[b]. The enormous dimenſions which he aſſigns to Palibothra, of no leſs than ten miles in length, and two in breadth, and ſurrounded by walls in which there were five hundred and ſeventy towers, and ſixty-four gates, would probably have been ranked by Europeans among the wonders which he delighted to relate, if they were not now well acquainted with the rambling

SECT. I.

[a] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 2.

[b] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1035. C.

manner

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SECT. II. manner in which the cities of India are built, and did not know with certainty that, both in former and in the preſent times, it might boaſt of cities ſtill more extenſive [c].

THIS embaſſy of Megaſthenes to Sandracottus, and another of Daimachus to his ſon and ſucceſſor Allitrochidas, are the laſt tranſactions of the Syrian monarchs with India, of which we have any account [d]. Nor can we either fix with accuracy the time, or deſcribe the manner in which their poſſeſſions in India were wreſted from them. It is probable that they were obliged to abandon that country ſoon after the death of Seleucus [e].

BUT though the great monarchs of Syria loſt, about this period, thoſe provinces in India, which had been ſubject to their dominion, the Greeks in a ſmaller kingdom, compoſed of ſome fragments of Alexander's empire, ſtill maintained an intercourſe with India, and even made ſome conſiderable acquiſition of territory there. This was the kingdom of Bactria, originally ſubject to Seleucus, but wreſted from his ſon or grandſon, and rendered an independent ſtate, about ſixty-nine years after

[c] Rennell Mem. 49, 50.
[d] See NOTE XV.
[e] Juſtin. lib. xv. c. 4.

the

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the death of Alexander. Concerning the transactions of this kingdom, we must rest satisfied with gleaning a few imperfect hints in ancient authors. From them we learn that its commerce with India was great; that the conquests of the Bactrian kings in that country were more extensive than those of Alexander himself, and particularly that they recovered possession of the district near the mouth of the Indus, which he had subdued[f]. Each of the six princes who reigned in Bactria, carried on military operations in India with such success, that they penetrated far into the interior part of the country, and proud of the conquests which they had made, as well as of the extensive dominions over which they reigned, some of them assumed the lofty title of *Great King*, which distinguished the Persian monarchs in the days of their highest splendour. But we should not have known how long this kingdom of Bactria subsisted, or in what manner it terminated, if M. de Guignes had not called in the historians of China to supply the defects of the Greek and Roman writers. By them we are informed, that about one hundred and twenty-six years before the Christian æra, a

SECT. I.

[f] Strabo, lib. xi. 785. D. lib. xv. 1006. B. Justin, lib. xli. c. 4. Bayer Hist. Regni Græcor. Bactriani, passim.

power-

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SECT. I. powerful horde of Tartars, puſhed from their native ſeats on the confines of China, and obliged to move towards the weſt by the preſſure of a more numerous body that rolled on behind them, paſſed the Jaxartes, and pouring in upon Bactria, like an irreſiſtible torrent, overwhelmed that kingdom, and put an end to the dominion of the Greeks[f] there, after it had been eſtabliſhed near one hundred and thirty years[g].

FROM this time until the cloſe of the fifteenth century, when the Portugueſe, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, opened a new communication with the Eaſt, and carried their victorious arms into every part of India, no European power acquired territory, or eſtabliſhed its dominion there. During this long period, of more than ſixteen hundred years, all ſchemes of conqueſt in India ſeem to have been totally relinquiſhed, and nothing more was aimed at by any nation, than to ſecure an intercourſe of trade with that opulent country.

IT was in Egypt that the ſeat of this intercourſe was eſtabliſhed; and it is not without ſurpriſe that we obſerve how ſoon and how regularly

[f] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxv. p. 17, &c.

[g] See NOTE XVI.

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SECT. I.

gularly the commerce with the Eaſt came to be carried on by that channel, in which the ſagacity of Alexander deſtined it to flow. Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, as ſoon as he took poſſeſſion of Egypt, eſtabliſhed the ſeat of government in Alexandria. By ſome exertions of authority, and many acts of liberality, but chiefly by the fame of his mild and equal adminiſtration, he drew ſuch a number of inhabitants to this favourite reſidence, that it ſoon became a populous and wealthy city. As Ptolemy deſerved and had poſſeſſed the confidence of Alexander more perfectly than any of his officers, he knew well that his chief object in founding Alexandria was to ſecure the advantages ariſing from the trade with India. A long and proſperous reign was favourable to the proſecution of that object, and though ancient authors have not enabled us to trace the ſteps which the firſt Ptolemy took for this purpoſe, we have a ſtriking evidence of his extraordinary attention to naval affairs, in his erecting a light-houſe on the iſland of Pharos, at the mouth of the harbour of Alexandria[h], a work of ſuch magnificence as to be reckoned one of the ſeven wonders of the world. With reſpect to the commercial arrangements of his ſon Ptolemy Philadelphus, we have more perfect information. In order to bring the trade

[h] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1140. C.

with

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SECT. I.

with India, (which began to revive at Tyre, its antient ſtation[l],) to centre in Alexandria, he ſet about forming a canal, an hundred cubits in breadth, and thirty cubits in depth, between Arſinoe on the Red Sea, not far from the ſituation of the modern Suez, and the Peluſiac or eaſtern branch of the Nile, by means of which the productions of India might have been conveyed to that capital wholly by water. But either on account of ſome danger apprehended from completing it, that work was never finiſhed; or from the ſlow and dangerous navigation towards the northern extremity of the Red Sea, this canal was found to be of ſo little uſe, that in order to facilitate the communication with India, he built a city on the weſt coaſt of that ſea, almoſt under the Tropic, to which he gave the name of Berenice[k]. This new city ſoon became the ſtaple of the trade with India[l]. From Berenice the goods were tranſported by land to Coptos, a city three miles diſtant from the Nile, but which had a communication with that river by a navigable canal, of which there are ſtill ſome remains[m], and thence carried down

[i] Strabo, lib. xvi. 1089. A.

[k] Strabo, lib. xvii. 1156. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 29.

[l] See NOTE XVII.

[m] D'Anville Mem. de l'Egypte, p. 21.

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the ſtream to Alexandria. The diſtance between Berenice and Coptos was, according to Pliny, two hundred and fifty-eight Roman miles, and the road lay through the deſart of Thebais, almoſt entirely deſtitute of water. But the attention of a powerful monarch made proviſion for ſupplying this want, by ſearching for ſprings, and wherever theſe were found he built inns, or more probably in the eaſtern ſtyle caravanſeras, for the accommodation of merchants[n]. In this channel the intercourſe between the Eaſt and Weſt continued to be carried on during two hundred and fifty years, as long as Egypt remained an independent kingdom. SECT. I.

THE ſhips deſtined for India took their departure from Berenice, and ſailing, according to the ancient mode of navigation, along the Arabian ſhore, to the promontory Syagrus, (now Cape Raſalgate,) held their courſe along the coaſt of Perſia, either directly to Pattala, (now Tatta,) at the head of the lower Delta of the Indus, or to ſome other emporium on the weſt coaſt of India. To this part of India, which Alexander had viſited and ſubdued, the commerce under the protection of the Egyptian monarchs ſeems to have been confined for a

[n] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1157. D. 1169.

conſiderable

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SECT. I.

conſiderable time. Afterwards a more convenient courſe was followed, and from Cape Raſalgate veſſels ſailed in a direct courſe to Zizerus. This, according to M. de Monteſquieu [o], was the kingdom of Sigertis, on the ſea-coaſt adjacent to the mouth of the Indus, conquered by the Greek monarchs of Bactria; according to Major Rennell [p], it was a port on the northern part of the Malabar coaſt. Ancient authors have not conveyed ſuch information as will enable us to pronounce with certainty, which of theſe two oppoſite opinions is beſt founded. Nor can we point out with accuracy, what were the other ports in India which the merchants from Berenice frequented, when that trade was firſt opened. As they ſailed in veſſels of ſmall burden, which crept timidly along the coaſt, it is probable that their voyages were circumſcribed within very narrow limits, and that under the Ptolemies no conſiderable progreſs was made in the diſcovery of India [q].

FROM this monopoly of the commerce by ſea between the eaſt and weſt, which Egypt long enjoyed, it derived that extraordinary degree of opulence and power for which it was conſpi-

[o] L'Eſprit des Loix, lib. xxi. c. 7.

[p] Introduct. p. xxxvii.

[q] See NOTE XVIII.

cuous.

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cuous. In modern times, acquainted with the vigilant and enterprizing activity of commercial rivalſhip, there is hardly any circumſtance in ancient ſtory which appears more ſurpriſing, than that the ſovereigns of Egypt ſhould have been permitted to engroſs this lucrative trade without competition, or any attempt to wreſt it out of their hands; eſpecially as the powerful monarchs of Syria might, from the Perſian Gulf, have carried on an intercourſe with the ſame parts of India, by a ſhorter and ſafer courſe of navigation. Different conſiderations ſeem to have induced them ſo tamely to relinquiſh all the obvious advantages of this commerce. The kings of Egypt, by their attention to maritime affairs, had formed a powerful fleet, which gave them ſuch decided command of the ſea, that they could have cruſhed with eaſe any rival in trade. No commercial intercourſe ſeems ever to have been carried on by ſea between Perſia and India. The Perſians had ſuch an inſuperable averſion to that element, or were ſo much afraid of foreign invaſion, that their monarchs (as I have already obſerved) obſtructed the navigation of the great rivers, which gave acceſs to the interior parts of the country, by artificial works. As their ſubjects, however, were no leſs deſirous than the people around them to poſſeſs the valuable productions and elegant

SECT. I.

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SECT. I.

manufactures of India, theſe were conveyed to all the parts of their extenſive dominions by land-carriage. The commodities deſtined for the ſupply of the northern provinces, were tranſported on camels from the banks of the Indus to thoſe of the Oxus, down the ſtream of which they were carried to the Caſpian ſea, and diſtributed, partly by land-carriage, and partly by navigable rivers, through the different countries, bounded on one hand by the Caſpian, and on the other by the Euxine ſea [r]. The commodities of India intended for the ſouthern and interior provinces, proceeded by land from the Caſpian gates to ſome of the great rivers, by which they were circulated through every part of the country. This was the ancient mode of intercourſe with India, while the Perſian empire was governed by its native princes; and it has been obſerved in every age, that when any branch of commerce has got into a certain channel, although it may be neither the moſt proper nor the moſt commodious one, it requires long time, and conſiderable efforts, to give it a different direction [s].

[r] Strabo, lib. xii. 776. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.

[s] See NOTE XIX.

To

SECT. I.

To all theſe reaſons for ſuffering the monarchs of Egypt to continue in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the trade with India by ſea, another may be added. Many of the ancients, by an error in geography extremely unaccountable, and in which they perſiſted, notwithſtanding repeated opportunities of obtaining more accurate information, believed the Caſpian ſea to be a branch of the great Northern Ocean, and the kings of Syria might hope by that means to open a communication with Europe, and to circulate through it the valuable productions of the Eaſt, without intruding into thoſe ſeas, the navigation of which the Egyptian monarchs ſeemed to conſider as their excluſive right. This idea had been early formed by the Greeks, when they became maſters of Aſia. Seleucus Nicator, the firſt and moſt ſagacious of the Syrian kings, at the time when he was aſſaſſinated, entertained thoughts of forming a junction between the Caſpian and Euxine ſeas by a canal [t], and if this could have been effected, his ſubjects, beſides the extenſion of their trade in Europe, might have ſupplied all the countries in the North of Aſia, on the coaſt of the Euxine ſea, as well as many of thoſe which ſtretch eaſtward from the Caſpian, with the productions of India. As thoſe countries,

[t] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 11.

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SECT. I. though now thinly inhabited by a miserable race of men, destitute of industry and of wealth, were in ancient times extremely populous, and filled with great and opulent cities, this must have been considered as a branch of commerce of such magnitude and value, as to render the securing of it an object worthy the attention of the most powerful monarch.

But while the monarchs of Egypt and Syria laboured with emulation and ardour to secure to their subjects all the advantages of the Indian trade, a power arose in the West which proved fatal to both. The Romans, by the vigour of their military institutions, and the wisdom of their political conduct, having rendered themselves masters of all Italy and Sicily, soon overturned the rival republic of Carthage, A. C. 55. subjected Macedonia and Greece, extended their dominion over Syria, and at last turned their victorious arms against Egypt, the only kingdom remaining of those established by the successors of Alexander the Great. After a series of events, which belong not to the subject of this Disquisition, Egypt was annexed to the Roman empire, and reduced into the form of a Roman province by Augustus. Aware of its A. C. 30. great importance, he, with that provident sagacity which distinguishes his character, not only reserved

reſerved it as one of the provinces ſubject immediately to Imperial authority, but by various precautions, well known to every ſcholar, provided for its ſecurity. This extraordinary ſolicitude ſeems to have proceeded not only from conſidering Egypt as one of the chief granaries on which the capital depended for ſubſiſtence, but as the ſeat of that lucrative commerce which had enabled its ancient monarchs to amaſs ſuch enormous wealth, as excited the admiration and envy of other princes, and produced, when brought into the treaſury of the empire, a conſiderable alteration, both in the value of property, and the ſtate of manners, in Rome itſelf. SECT. I.

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION II.

Intercourſe with India, from the Eſtabliſhment of the Roman Dominion in Egypt, to the Conqueſt of that Kingdom by the Mahomedans.

SECT. II.

UPON the conqueſt of Egypt by the Romans, and the reduction of that kingdom to a province of their empire, the trade with India continued to be carried on in the ſame mode, under their powerful protection: Rome, enriched with the ſpoils and the tribute of almoſt all the known world, had acquired a taſte for luxuries of every kind. Among people of this deſcription, the productions of India have always been held in the higheſt eſtimation. The capital of the greateſt empire

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pire ever eſtabliſhed in Europe, filled with citizens, who had now no occupation but to enjoy and diſſipate the wealth accumulated by their anceſtors, demanded every thing elegant, rare, or coſtly, which that remote region could furniſh, in order to ſupport its pomp, or heighten its pleaſures. To ſupply this demand, new and extraordinary efforts became requiſite, and the commerce with India increaſed to a degree, which (as I have obſerved in another place [a]) will appear aſtoniſhing even to the preſent age, in which that branch of trade has been extended far beyond the practice or conception of any former period.

SECT. II.

Besides the Indian commodities imported into the capital of the empire from Egypt, the Romans received an additional ſupply of them by another mode of conveyance. From the earlieſt times, there ſeems to have been ſome communication between Meſopotamia, and other provinces on the banks of the Euphrates, and thoſe parts of Syria and Paleſtine, which lay near the Mediterranean. The migration of Abram from Ur, of the Chaldees from Sichem in the land of Canaan, is an inſtance of this [b]. The journey through the deſart,

[a] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 25. [b] Geneſ. xi. xii.

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SECT. II.

which separated these countries, was much facilitated by its affording one station abounding with water, and capable of cultivation. As the intercourse increased, the possession of this station became an object of so much importance, that Solomon, when he turned his attention towards the extension of commerce among his subjects, built a fenced city there [c]. Its Syrian name of *Tadmor* in the wilderness, and its Greek one of *Palmyra*, are both descriptive of its situation in a spot adorned with palm-trees. This is not only plentifully supplied with water, but surrounded by a portion of fertile land, which (though of no great extent) renders it a delightful habitation in the midst of barren sands and an inhospitable desart. Its happy position, at the distance of eighty-five miles from the river Euphrates, and about one hundred and seventeen miles from the nearest coast of the Mediterranean [d], induced its inhabitants to enter with ardour into the trade of conveying commodities from one of these

[c] 1 Kings, ix. 18. 2 Chron. viii. 4.

[d] In the former edition, I stated the distance of Palmyra from the Euphrates at sixty miles, and from the Mediterranean at two hundred and three miles. Into these errors I was led by M. D'Anville, who, in his Memoire sur l'Euphrate et le Tigris, a work published in old age, did not retain his wonted accuracy. From information communicated by Major Rennell, I have substituted the true distances.

to

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SECT. II.

to the other. As the moſt valuable productions of India, brought up the Euphrates from the Perſian Gulf, are of ſuch ſmall bulk as to bear the expence of a long land-carriage, this trade ſoon became ſo conſiderable that the opulence and power of Palmyra increaſed rapidly. Its government was of the form which is beſt ſuited to the genius of a commercial city, republican; and from the peculiar advantages of its ſituation, as well as the ſpirit of its inhabitants, it long maintained its independence, though ſurrounded by powerful and ambitious neighbours. Under the Syrian monarchs deſcended from Seleucus it attained to its higheſt degree of ſplendour and wealth, one great ſource of which ſeems to have been the ſupplying their ſubjects with Indian commodities. When Syria ſubmitted to the irreſiſtible arms of Rome, Palmyra continued upwards of two centuries a free ſtate, and its friendſhip was courted with emulation and ſolicitude by the Romans, and their rivals for empire, the Parthians. That it traded with both, and particularly that from it Rome as well as other parts of the empire received the productions of India, we learn from Appian, an author of good credit [e]. But in tracing the progreſs of the commerce of the ancients with

[e] Appian. de Bello Civil. lib. v. p. 1076. edit. Tollii.

the

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SECT. II.

the Eaſt, I ſhould not have ventured, upon his ſingle teſtimony, to mention this among the channels of note in which it was carried on, if a ſingular diſcovery, for which we are indebted to the liberal curioſity and enterpriſing ſpirit of our own countrymen, did not confirm and illuſtrate what he relates. Towards the cloſe of the laſt century, ſome gentlemen of the Engliſh factory at Aleppo, incited by what they heard in the Eaſt concerning the wonderful ruins of Palmyra, ventured, notwithſtanding the fatigue and danger of a journey through the deſart, to viſit them. To their aſtoniſhment they beheld a fertile ſpot of ſome miles in extent ariſing like an iſland out of a vaſt plain of ſand, covered with the remains of temples, porticoes, aqueducts, and other public works, which, in magnificence and ſplendour, and ſome of them in elegance, were not unworthy of Athens or of Rome in their moſt proſperous ſtate. Allured by their deſcription of them, about ſixty years thereafter, a party of more enlightened travellers, having reviewed the ruins of Palmyra with greater attention and more ſcientific ſkill, declared that what they beheld there exceeded the moſt exalted ideas which they had formed concerning it [f].

[f] Wood's Ruins of Palmyra, p. 37.

FROM

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SECT. II.

FROM both theſe accounts, as well as from recollecting the extraordinary degree of power to which Palmyra had attained, when Egypt, Syria, Meſopotamia, and a conſiderable part of Aſia Minor were conquered by its arms; when Odenatus, its chief magiſtrate, was decorated with the Imperial purple, and Zenobia contended for the dominion of the Eaſt with Rome under one of its moſt warlike Emperors, it is evident, that a ſtate which could derive little importance from its original territory, muſt have owed its aggrandizement to the opulence acquired by extenſive commerce. Of this the Indian trade was undoubtedly the moſt conſiderable, and moſt lucrative branch. But it is a cruel mortification, in ſearching for what is inſtructive in the hiſtory of paſt times, to find that the exploits of conquerors who have deſolated the earth, and the freaks of tyrants who have rendered nations unhappy, are recorded with minute and often diſguſting accuracy, while the diſcovery of uſeful arts, and the progreſs of the moſt beneficial branches of commerce, are paſſed over in ſilence, and ſuffered to ſink into oblivion.

AFTER the conqueſt of Palmyra by Aurelian, trade never revived there. At preſent a few miſerable huts of beggarly Arabs are ſcattered in the courts of its ſtately temples, or deform its elegant

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SECT. II.

elegant porticoes; and exhibit an humiliating contraſt to its ancient magnificence.

But while the merchants of Egypt and Syria exerted their activity in order to ſupply the increaſing demands of Rome for Indian commodities, and vied with each other in their efforts, the eagerneſs of gain (as Pliny obſerves) brought India itſelf nearer to the reſt of the world. In the courſe of their voyages to that country, the Greek and Egyptian pilots could not fail to obſerve the regular ſhifting of the periodical winds or monſoons, and how ſteadily they continued to blow during one part of the year from the Eaſt, and during the other from the Weſt. Encouraged by attending to this circumſtance, Hippalus, the commander of a ſhip engaged in the Indian trade, ventured, about fourſcore years after Egypt was annexed to the Roman empire, to relinquiſh the ſlow and circuitous courſe which I have deſcribed, and ſtretching boldly from the mouth of the Arabian Gulf acroſs the ocean, was carried by the weſtern monſoon to Muſiris, a harbour in that part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coaſt.

This route to India was held to be a diſcovery of ſuch importance, that in order to perpetuate the memory of the inventor, the

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SECT. II.

name of Hippalus was given to the wind which enabled him to perform the voyage[g]. As this was one of the greateſt efforts of navigation in the ancient world, and opened the beſt communication by ſea between the Eaſt and Weſt that was known for fourteen hundred years, it merits a particular deſcription. Fortunately Pliny has enabled us to give it with a degree of accuracy, which can ſeldom be attained in tracing the naval or commercial operations of the ancients. From Alexandria (he obſerves) to Juliopolis is two miles; there the cargo deſtined for India is embarked on the Nile, and is carried to Coptos, which is diſtant three hundred and three miles, and the voyage is uſually accompliſhed in twelve days. From Coptos goods are conveyed by land carriage to Berenice on the Arabian Gulf, halting at different ſtations regulated according to the conveniency of watering. The diſtance between theſe cities is two hundred and fifty-eight miles. On account of the heat, the caravan travels only during the night, and the journey is finiſhed on the twelfth day. From Berenice, ſhips take their departure about midſummer, and in thirty days reach Ocelis (Gella) at the mouth of the Arabian

[g] Perip. Mar. Erythr. p. 32.

Gulf,

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SECT. II.

Gulf, or Cane (Cape Fartaque) on the coaſt of Arabia Felix. Thence they ſail in forty days to Muſiris, the firſt emporium in India. They begin their voyage homewards early in the Egyptian month Thibi, which anſwers to our December; they ſail with a north-eaſt wind, and when they enter the Arabian Gulf meet with a ſouth or ſouth-weſt wind, and thus complete the voyage in leſs than a year [k].

THE account which Pliny gives of Muſiris, and of Barace, another harbour not far diſtant, which was likewiſe frequented by the ſhips from Berenice, as being both ſo incommodious for trade on account of the ſhallowneſs of the ports, that it became neceſſary to diſcharge and take in the cargoes in ſmall boats, does not enable us to fix their poſition with perfect accuracy. This deſcription applies to many ports on the Malabar coaſt, but from two circumſtances mentioned by him; one, that they are not far diſtant from Cottonara, the country which produces pepper in great abundance; and the other, that in ſailing towards them the courſe lay near Nitrias, the ſtation of the pirates; I adopt the opinion of Major Rennell, that they were ſituated ſomewhere between Goa and

[k] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE XX.

Telli-

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Tellicherry, and that probably the modern Meerzaw or Merjee is the Muſiris of the ancients, and Barcelore their Barace[i]. SECT. II.

As in theſe two ports was the principal ſtaple of the trade between Egypt and India, when in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, this ſeems to be the proper place for inquiring into the nature of the commerce which the ancients, particularly the Romans, carried on with that country, and for enumerating the commodities moſt in requeſt, which they imported from it. But as the operations of commerce, and the mode of regulating it, were little attended to in thoſe ſtates of antiquity, of whoſe tranſactions we have any accurate knowledge; their hiſtorians hardly enter into any detail concerning a ſubject of ſuch ſubordinate importance in their political ſyſtem, and it is moſtly from brief hints, detached facts, and incidental obſervations, that we can gather information concerning it[k].

In every age, it has been a commerce of luxury, rather than of neceſſity, which has been carried on between Europe and India. Its elegant manufactures, ſpices, and precious ſtones, are neither objects of deſire to nations

[i] Introd. p. xxxvii. [k] See NOTE XXI.

of

SECT. II.

of ſimple manners, nor are ſuch nations poſſeſſed of wealth ſufficient to purchaſe them. But at the time the Romans became maſters of the Indian trade, they were not only (as has already been obſerved) in that ſtage of ſociety when men are eager to obtain every thing that can render the enjoyment of life more exquiſite, or add to its ſplendour, but they had acquired all the fantaſtic taſtes formed by the caprice and extravagance of wealth. They were of conſequence highly delighted with thoſe new objects of gratification with which India ſupplied them in ſuch abundance. The productions of that country, natural as well as artificial, ſeem to have been much the ſame in that age as in the preſent. But the taſte of the Romans in luxury differed in many reſpects from that of modern times, and of courſe their demands from India differed conſiderably from ours.

In order to convey an idea of their demands as complete as poſſible, I ſhall in the firſt place make ſome obſervations on the three great articles of general importation from India, 1. Spices and aromatics. 2. Precious ſtones and pearls. 3. Silk. And then I ſhall give ſome account (as far as I can venture to do it from authentic information) of the aſſortment of cargoes, both outward and homeward bound, for

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for the veſſels fitted out at Berenice to different ports of India.

SECT. II.

I. SPICES and aromatics. From the mode of religious worſhip in the heathen world; from the incredible number of their deities, and of the temples conſecrated to them; the conſumption of frankincenſe and other aromatics which were uſed in every ſacred function, muſt have been very great. But the vanity of men occaſioned a greater conſumption of theſe fragrant ſubſtances, than their piety. It was the cuſtom of the Romans to burn the bodies of their dead, and they deemed it a diſplay of magnificence, to cover not only the body but the funeral pile on which it was laid, with the moſt coſtly ſpices. At the funeral of Sylla, two hundred and ten burdens of ſpices were ſtrewed upon the pile. Nero is reported to have burnt a quantity of cinnamon and caſſia at the funeral of Pappœa, greater than the countries from which it was imported produced in one year. We conſume in heaps theſe precious ſubſtances with the carcaſſes of the dead (ſays Pliny): We offer them to the Gods only in grains [m]. It was not from India, I am aware, but from Arabia, that aromatics were firſt imported into Europe; and ſome of them, particularly frankincenſe, were productions of that

[m] Nat. Hiſt. lib. xii c. 18.

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SECT. II.

country. But the Arabians were accuſtomed, together with ſpices of native growth, to furniſh foreign merchants with others of higher value, which they brought from India, and the regions beyond it. The commercial intercourſe of the Arabians with the Eaſtern parts of Aſia, was not only early, but conſiderable. By means of their trading caravans, they conveyed into their own country all the valuable productions of the Eaſt, among which, ſpices held a chief place. In every ancient account of Indian commodities, ſpices and aromatics of various kinds form a principal article [n]. Some authors aſſert that the greater part of thoſe purchaſed in Arabia were not the growth of that country, but brought from India [o]. That this aſſertion was well-founded, appears from what has been obſerved in modern times. The frankincenſe of Arabia, though reckoned the peculiar and moſt precious production of the country, is much inferior in quality to that imported into it from the Eaſt; and it is chiefly with the latter, that the Arabians at preſent ſupply the extenſive demands of various provinces of Aſia for this commodity [p]. It is upon good authority, then,

[n] Peripl. Mar. Eryth. p. 22. 28. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 156. A. lib. xv. p. 1018. A.

[o] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1129. C.

[p] Niebuhr. Deſcript. de l'Arabie, tom. i. p. 126.

that,

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that I have mentioned the importation of ſpices as one of the moſt conſiderable branches of ancient commerce with India. In the Auguſtan age, an entire ſtreet in Rome ſeems to have been occupied by thoſe who ſold frankincenſe, pepper, and other aromatics [q].

SECT. II.

II. PRECIOUS ſtones, together with which pearls may be claſſed, ſeem to be the article next in value imported by the Romans from the Eaſt. As theſe have no pretenſion to be of any real uſe, their value ariſes entirely from their beauty and their rarity, and even when eſtimated moſt moderately is always high. But among nations far advanced in luxury, when they are deemed not only ornaments but marks of diſtinction, the vain and the opulent vie ſo eagerly with one another for the poſſeſſion of them, that they riſe in price to an exorbitant and almoſt incredible height. Diamonds, though the art of cutting them was imperfectly known to the ancients, held an high place in eſtimation among them as well as among us. The comparative value of other precious ſtones varied according to the diverſity of taſtes and the caprice of faſhion. The immenſe number of them mentioned by Pliny,

[q] Hor. lib. ii. epiſt. 1.

SECT. II.

and the laborious care with which he deſcribes and arranges them [r], will aſtoniſh, I ſhould ſuppoſe, the moſt ſkilful lapidary or jeweller of modern times, and ſhews the high requeſt in which they were held by the Romans.

But among all the articles of luxury, the Romans ſeem to have given the preference to pearls [s]. Perſons of every rank purchaſed them with eagerneſs; they were worn on every part of dreſs; and there is ſuch a difference, both in ſize and in value, among pearls, that while ſuch as were large and of ſuperior luſtre adorned the wealthy and the great, ſmaller ones and of inferior quality gratified the vanity of perſons in more humble ſtations of life. Julius Cæſar preſented Servilia, the mother of Brutus, with a pearl, for which he paid forty-eight thouſand four hundred and fifty-ſeven pounds. The famous pearl ear-rings of Cleopatra were in value one hundred and ſixty-one thouſand four hundred and fifty-eight pounds [t]. Precious ſtones, it is true, as well as pearls, were found not only in India, but in many different countries, and all were ranſacked in order to gratify the pride of Rome. India, however,

[r] Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxxvii.
[s] See NOTE XXII.
[t] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. ix. c. 35. See NOTE XXIII.

furniſhed

furniſhed the chief part, and its productions were allowed to be moſt abundant, diverſified, and valuable. SECT. II.

III. ANOTHER production of India in great demand at Rome, was ſilk; and when we recollect the variety of elegant fabrics into which it may be formed, and how much theſe have added to the ſplendour of dreſs and furniture, we cannot wonder at its being held in ſuch eſtimation by a luxurious people. The price it bore was exorbitant; but it was deemed a dreſs too expenſive and too delicate for men [u], and was appropriated wholly to women of eminent rank and opulence. This, however, did not render the demand for it leſs eager, eſpecially after the example of the diſſolute Elagabalus introduced the uſe of it among the other ſex, and accuſtomed men to the diſgrace (as the ſeverity of ancient ideas accounted it) of wearing this effeminate garb. Two circumſtances concerning the traffic of ſilk among the Romans merit obſervation. Contrary to what uſually takes place in the operations of trade, the more general uſe of that commodity ſeems not to have increaſed the quantity imported, in ſuch proportion as to anſwer the growing demand for it,

[u] Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. c. 33.

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SECT. II.

and the price of ſilk was not reduced during the courſe of two hundred and fifty years from the time of its being firſt known in Rome. In the reign of Aurelian, it ſtill continued to be valued at its weight in gold. This, it is probable, was owing to the mode in which that commodity was procured by the merchants of Alexandria. They had no direct intercourſe with China, the only country in which the ſilk-worm was then reared, and its labour rendered an article of commerce. All the ſilk which they purchaſed in the different ports of India that they frequented, was brought thither in ſhips of the country; and either from ſome defect of ſkill in managing the ſilk-worm, the produce of its ingenious induſtry among the Chineſe was ſcanty, or the intermediate dealers found greater advantage in furniſhing the market of Alexandria with a ſmall quantity at an high price, than to lower its value by increaſing the quantity. The other circumſtance which I had in view is more extraordinary, and affords a ſtriking proof of the imperfect communication of the ancients with remote nations, and of the ſlender knowledge which they had of their natural productions or arts. Much as the manufactures of ſilk were admired, and often as ſilk is mentioned by the Greek and Roman authors, they had not, for ſeveral

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SECT. II.

ſeveral centuries after the uſe of it became common, any certain knowledge either of the countries to which they were indebted for this favourite article of elegance, or of the manner in which it was produced. By ſome, ſilk was ſuppoſed to be a fine down adhering to the leaves of certain trees or flowers; others imagined it to be a delicate ſpecies of wool or cotton; and even thoſe who had learned that it was the work of an inſect, ſhew, by their deſcriptions, that they had no diſtinct idea of the manner in which it was formed [z]. It was in conſequence of an event that happened in the ſixth century of the Chriſtian æra, of which I ſhall hereafter take notice, that the real nature of ſilk became known in Europe.

THE other commodities uſually imported from India, will be mentioned in the account, which I now proceed to give, of the cargoes ſent out and brought home in the ſhips employed in the trade with that country. For this we are indebted to the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, aſcribed to Arrian, a curious though ſhort treatiſe, leſs known than it deſerves to be, and which enters into ſome details concerning commerce, to which there is nothing

[z] See NOTE XXIV.

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SECT. II.

similar in any ancient writer. The first place in India, in which the ships from Egypt, while they followed the ancient course of navigation, were accustomed to trade, was Patala in the river Indus. They imported into it woollen cloth of a slight fabric, linen in chequer work, some precious stones, and some aromatics unknown in India, coral, storax, glass vessels of different kinds, some wrought silver, money, and wine. In return for these, they received spices of various kinds, sapphires, and other gems, silk stuffs, silk thread, cotton cloths[y], and black pepper. But a far more considerable emporium on the same coast was Barygaza, and on that account the author, whom I follow here, describes its situation, and the mode of approaching it, with great minuteness and accuracy. Its situation corresponds entirely with that of Baroach, on the great river Nerbuddah, down the stream of which, or by land-carriage, from the great city of Tagara across high mountains[z], all the productions of the interior country were conveyed to it. The articles of importation and exportation in this great mart were extensive and various. Besides these already mentioned, our author enumerates among the former, Italian, Greek, and Arabian wines,

[y] See NOTE XXV. [z] See NOTE XXVI.

brass,

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braſs, tin, lead, girdles or ſaſhes of curious texture, melilot, white glaſs, red arſenic, black lead, gold and ſilver coin. Among the exports he mentions the onyx, and other gems, ivory, myrrh, various fabrics of cotton, both plain and ornamented with flowers, and long pepper [a]. At Muſiris, the next emporium of note on that coaſt, the articles imported were much the ſame as at Barygaza; but as it lay nearer to the eaſtern parts of India, and ſeems to have had much communication with them, the commodities exported from it were more numerous and more valuable. He ſpecifies particularly pearls in great abundance and of extraordinary beauty, a variety of ſilk ſtuffs, rich perfumes, tortoiſe-ſhell, different kinds of tranſparent gems, eſpecially diamonds, and pepper in large quantities, and of the beſt quality [b].

The juſtneſs of the account given by this author of the articles imported from India, is confirmed by a Roman law, in which the Indian commodities ſubject to the payment of duties are enumerated [c]. By comparing theſe two accounts, we may form an idea tolerably

[a] Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 28. [b] Ibid. 31, 32.

[c] Digeſt, lib. xxxix. tit. iv. § 16. De publicanis et vectigalibus.

exact,

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SECT. II.

exact, of the nature and extent of the trade with India in ancient times.

As the ſtate of ſociety and manners among the natives of India, in the earlieſt period in which they are known, nearly reſembled what we obſerve among their deſcendants in the preſent age; their wants and demands were, of courſe, much the ſame. The ingenuity of their own artiſts were ſo able to ſupply theſe, that they ſtood little in need of foreign manufactures or productions, except ſome of the uſeful metals, which their own country did not furniſh in ſufficient quantity; and then, as now, it was moſtly with gold and ſilver that the luxuries of the Eaſt were purchaſed. In two particulars, however, our importations from India differ greatly from thoſe of the ancients. The dreſs, both of the Greeks and Romans, was almoſt entirely woollen, which, by their frequent uſe of the warm bath, was rendered abundantly comfortable. Their conſumption of linen and cotton cloths was much inferior to that of modern times, when theſe are worn by perſons in every rank of life. Accordingly, a great branch of modern importation from that part of India with which the ancients were acquainted, is in *piece-goods*; comprehending, under that mercantile term, the immenſe variety of fabrics, which

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which Indian ingenuity has formed of cotton. But, as far as I have obſerved, we have no authority that will juſtify us in ſtating the ancient importation of theſe to be in any degree conſiderable. SECT. II.

In modern times, though it continues ſtill to be chiefly a commerce of luxury that is carried on with India, yet, together with the articles that miniſter to it, we import, to a conſiderable extent, various commodities, which are to be conſidered merely as the materials of our domeſtic manufactures. Such are, the cotton-wool of Indoſtan, the ſilk of China, and the ſalt-petre of Bengal. But, in the accounts of ancient importations from India, raw ſilk and ſilk-thread excepted, I find nothing mentioned that could ſerve as the materials of any home-manufacture. The navigation of the ancients never having extended to China, the quantity of unwrought ſilk with which they were ſupplied, by means of the Indian traders, appears to have been ſo ſcanty, that the manufacture of it could not make an addition of any moment to their domeſtic induſtry.

After this ſuccinct account of the commerce carried on by the ancients in India, I proceed to inquire what knowledge they had of the countries beyond the ports of Muſiris and Barace, the

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SECT. II.

the utmoſt boundary towards the Eaſt to which I have hitherto traced their progreſs. The Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, whoſe accuracy of deſcription juſtifies the confidence with which I have followed him for ſome time, ſeems to have been little acquainted with that part of the coaſt which ſtretches from Barace towards the ſouth. He mentions, indeed, curſorily, two or three different ports, but gives no intimation that any of them were ſtaples of the commerce with Egypt. He haſtens to Comar, or Cape Comorin, the ſouthernmoſt point of the Indian peninſula; and his deſcription of it is ſo accurate, and ſo conformable to its real ſtate, as ſhews his information concerning it to have been perfectly authentic [d]. Near to this he places the pearl-fiſhery of Colchos, the modern Kilkare, undoubtedly the ſame with that now carried on by the Dutch in the ſtreight which ſeparates the iſland of Ceylon from the continent; as adjacent to this he mentions three different ports, which appear to have been ſituated on the eaſt ſide of the peninſula now known by the name of the Coromandel coaſt. He deſcribes theſe as *emporia*, or ſtations of trade [e]; but from an attentive conſideration of ſome cir-

[d] Peripl. p. 33. D'Anville Ant. de l'Inde, 118, &c.
[e] Peripl. p. 34.

cumſtances

SECT. II.

cumſtances in his account of them, I think it probable that the ſhips from Berenice did not fail to any of theſe ports, though they were ſupplied, as he informs us, with the commodities brought from Egypt, as well as with the productions of the oppoſite coaſt of the peninſula; but theſe ſeem to have been imported in *country ſhips* [f]. It was likewiſe in veſſels of their own, varying in form and burden, and diſtinguiſhed by different names, ſome of which he mentions, that they traded with the Golden Cherſoneſus, or kingdom of Malacca, and the countries near the Ganges. Not far from the mouth of that river he places an iſland, which he deſcribes as ſituated under the riſing ſun, and as the laſt region in the Eaſt that was inhabited [g]. Of all theſe parts of India, the Author of the Circumnavigation appears to have had very ſlender knowledge, as is manifeſt, not only from what he mentions concerning this imaginary iſland, and from his not attempting to deſcribe them, but from his relating, with the credulity and love of the marvellous, which always accompany and characteriſe ignorance, that theſe remote regions were peopled with cannibals, and men of uncouth and monſtrous forms [h].

[f] τοπικα πλοῖα.
[g] Peripl. p. 36.
[h] Peripl. p. 35.

I HAVE

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SECT. II.

I HAVE been induced to beſtow this attention, in tracing the courſe delineated in the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, becauſe the Author of it is the firſt ancient writer to whom we are indebted for any knowledge of the eaſtern coaſt of the great peninſula of India, or of the countries which lie beyond it. To Strabo, who compoſed his great work on geography in the reign of Auguſtus, India, particularly the moſt eaſtern parts of it, was little known. He begins his deſcription of it with requeſting the indulgence of his readers, on account of the ſcanty information he could obtain with reſpect to a country ſo remote, which Europeans had ſeldom viſited, and many of them tranſiently only, in the functions of military ſervice. He obſerves, that even commerce had contributed little towards an accurate inveſtigation of the country, as few of the merchants from Egypt and the Arabian Gulf had ever ſailed as far as the Ganges; and from men ſo illiterate, intelligence that merited a full degree of confidence could ſcarcely be expected. His deſcriptions of India, particularly its interior provinces, are borrowed almoſt entirely from the Memoirs of Alexander's Officers, with ſome ſlender additions from more recent accounts, and theſe ſo few in number, and ſometimes ſo inaccurate, as to furniſh a ſtriking proof of the

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SECT. II.

small progress which the ancients had made, from the time of Alexander, in exploring that country. When an author, possessed of such discernment and industry as Strabo, who visited in person several distant regions, that he might be able to describe them with greater accuracy, relates, that the Ganges enters the ocean by one mouth [1], we are warranted in concluding, that in his time there was either no direct navigation carried on to that great river, by the traders from the Arabian Gulf, or that this voyage was undertaken so seldom, that science had not then derived much information from it.

The next author, in order of time, from whom we receive any account of India, is the elder Pliny, who flourished about fifty years later than Strabo. As in the short description of India, given in his Natural History, he follows the same guides with Strabo, and seems to have had no knowledge of the interior country, but what he derived from the Memoirs of the Officers who served under Alexander and his immediate successors, it is unnecessary to examine his description minutely. He has added, however, two valuable articles, for which he was indebted to more recent discoveries. The one

[1] Strabo, lib. xv. 1011. C.

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SECT. II. is the account of the new course of navigation from the Arabian Gulf to the coast of Malabar, the nature and importance of which I have already explained. The other is a description of the island of Taprobana, which I shall consider particularly, after inquiring into what Ptolemy has contributed towards our knowledge of the ancient state of the Indian continent.

THOUGH Ptolemy, who published his works about fourscore years after Pliny, seems to have been distinguished for his persevering industry, and talent for arrangement, rather than for an inventive genius; geography has been more indebted to him for its improvement, than to any other philosopher. Fortunately for that science, in forming his general system of geography, he adopted the ideas, and imitated the practice of Hipparchus, who lived near four hundred years before his time. That great philosopher was the first who attempted to make a catalogue of the stars. In order to ascertain their position in the heavens with accuracy, he measured their distance from certain circles of the sphere, computing it by degrees, either from east to west, or from north to south. The former was denominated the longitude of the star, the latter its latitude. This mode he found to be of such utility in his astronomical researches, that he applied it with no less happy effect to geography;

phy; and it is a circumstance worthy of notice, that it was by observing and describing the heavens, men were first taught to measure and delineate the earth with exactness. This method of fixing the position of places, invented by Hipparchus, though known to the geographers between his time and that of Ptolemy, and mentioned both by Strabo [k] and by Pliny [l], was not employed by any of them. Of this neglect the most probable account seems to be, that, as none of them were astronomers, they did not fully comprehend all the advantages geography might derive from this invention [m]. These Ptolemy, who had devoted a long life to the improvement of astronomy, theoretical as well as practical, perfectly discerned, and, as in both Hipparchus was his guide, he, in his famous treatise on geography, described the different parts of the earth according to their longitude and latitude. Geography was thus established upon its proper principles, and intimately connected with astronomical observation and mathematical science. This work of Ptolemy soon rose high in estimation among the ancients [n]. During the middle ages, both in Arabia and in Europe, the decisions of

SECT. II.

[k] Lib. ii. [l] Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 12. 26. 70.

[m] See NOTE XXVII. [n] See NOTE XXVIII.

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SECT. II. Ptolemy, in every thing relative to geography, were ſubmitted to with an aſſent as implicit, as was yielded to thoſe of Ariſtotle in all other departments of ſcience. On the revival of a more liberal ſpirit of inquiry in the fifteenth century, the merit of Ptolemy's improvements in geography was examined and recognized; that ſcientific language which he firſt rendered general, continues to be uſed, and the poſition of places is ſtill aſcertained in the ſame diſtinct and compendious manner, by ſpecifying their longitude and latitude.

Not ſatisfied with adopting the general principles of Hipparchus, Ptolemy emulated him in the application of them; and, as that philoſopher had arranged all the conſtellations, he ventured upon what was no leſs arduous, to ſurvey all the regions of the earth which were then known, and with minute and bold deciſion he fixed the longitude and latitude of the moſt remarkable places in each of them. All his determinations, however, are not to be conſidered as the reſult of actual obſervation, nor did Ptolemy publiſh them as ſuch. Aſtronomical ſcience was confined, at that time, to a few countries. A conſiderable part of the globe was little viſited, and imperfectly deſcribed. The poſition of a ſmall number of places

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places only had been fixed with any degree of accuracy. Ptolemy was therefore obliged to consult the itineraries and surveys of the Roman Empire, which the political wisdom of that great state had completed with immense labour and expence [e]. Beyond the precincts of the empire, he had nothing on which he could rely, but the journals and reports of travellers. Upon these all his conclusions were founded; and as he resided in Alexandria at a time when the trade from that city to India was carried on to its utmost extent, this situation might have been expected to afford him the means of procuring ample information concerning it. But either from the imperfect manner in which that country was explored in his time, or from his placing too much confidence in the reports of persons who had visited it with little attention or discernment [f], his general delineation of the form of the Indian continent is the most erroneous that has been transmitted to us from antiquity. By an astonishing mistake, he has made the peninsula of India stretch from the Sinus Barygazenus, or Gulf of Cambay, from west to east, instead of extending, according to its real direction, from north to south [g].

SECT. II.

[e] See NOTE XXIX. [f] Geogr. lib. i. c. 17.

[g] See NOTE XXX.

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SECT. II.

This error will appear the more unaccountable, when we recollect that Megaſthenes had publiſhed a meaſurement of the Indian peninſula, which approaches near to its true dimenſions; and that this had been adopted, with ſome variations, by Eratoſthenes, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, who wrote prior to the age of Ptolemy[r].

ALTHOUGH Ptolemy was led to form ſuch an erroneous opinion concerning the general dimenſions of the Indian continent, his information with reſpect to the country in detail, and the ſituation of particular places, was more accurate; and he is the firſt author poſſeſſed of ſuch knowledge as enabled him to trace the ſea-coaſt, to mention the moſt noted places ſituated upon it, and to ſpecify the longitude and latitude of each from Cape Comorin eaſtward, to the utmoſt boundary of ancient navigation. With regard to ſome diſtricts, particularly along the eaſt ſide of the peninſula as far as the mouth of the Ganges, the accounts which he had received ſeem to have been ſo far exact, as to correſpond more nearly

[r] Strabo, lib. xv. 1010. B. Arrian, Hiſt. Indic. c. 3, 4. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. 148. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 21. See NOTE XXXI.

perhaps

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perhaps with the actual ſtate of the country, than the deſcriptions which he gives of any other part of India. M. D'Anville, with his uſual induſtry and diſcernment, has conſidered the principal ſtations as they are fixed by him, and finds that they correſpond to Kilkare, Negapatam, the mouth of the river Cauveri, Maſulipatam, Point Gordeware, &c. It is foreign to the object of this Diſquiſition, to enter into ſuch a minute detail; but in ſeveral inſtances we may obſerve, that not only the conformity of poſition, but the ſimilarity of ancient and modern names, is very ſtriking. The great river Cauveri is by Ptolemy named Chaberis; Arcot, in the interior country, is Arcati Regia; and probably the whole coaſt has received its preſent name of Coromandel from *Sor Mandulam*, or the kingdom of Soræ, which is ſituated upon it [a].

SECT. II.

In the courſe of one hundred and thirty-ſix years, which elapſed from the death of Strabo to that of Ptolemy, the commercial intercourſe with India was greatly extended; the latter geographer had acquired ſuch an acceſſion of new information concerning the Ganges, that he mentions

[a] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 1. D'Anville, Antiq. de l'Inde, 127, &c.

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SECT. II.

the names of fix different mouths of that river, and deſcribes their poſitions. His delineation, however, of that part of India which lies beyond the Ganges, is not leſs erroneous in its general form, than that which he gave of the peninſula, and bears as little reſemblance to the actual poſition of thoſe countries. He ventures, nevertheleſs, upon a ſurvey of them, ſimilar to that which he had made of the other great diviſion of India, which I have already examined. He mentions the places of note along the coaſt, ſome of which he diſtinguiſhes as *Emporia*; but whether that name was given to them on account of their being ſtaples of trade to the natives, in their traffic carried on from one diſtrict of India to another, or whether they were ports, to which veſſels from the Arabian Gulf reſorted directly, is not ſpecified. The latter I ſhould think to be the idea which Ptolemy means to convey; but theſe regions of India were ſo remote, and, from the timid and ſlow courſe of ancient navigation, were probably ſo little frequented, that his information concerning them is extremely defective, and his deſcriptions more obſcure, more inaccurate, and leſs conformable to the real ſtate of the country, than in any part of his geography. That peninſula to which he gives the name of the Golden Cherſoneſus, he

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he delineates as if it ſtretched directly from north to ſouth, and fixes the latitude of Sabana Emporium, its ſouthern extremity, three degrees beyond the line. To the eaſt of this peninſula he places, what he calls the Great Bay, and in the moſt remote part of it the ſtation of Catigara, the utmoſt boundary of navigation in ancient times, to which he aſſigns no leſs than eight degrees and a half of ſouthern latitude. Beyond this, he declares the earth to be altogether unknown, and aſſerts that the land turns thence to the weſtward, and ſtretches in that direction until it joins the promontory of Praſſum in Ethiopia, which, according to his idea, terminated the continent of Africa to the ſouth [t]. In conſequence of this error, no leſs unaccountable than enormous, he muſt have believed the Erythræan Sea, in its whole extent from the coaſt of Africa to that of Cambodia, to be a vaſt baſon, without any communication with the ocean [u].

SECT. II.

Out of the confuſion of thoſe wild ideas, in which the accounts of ignorant or fabulous tra-

[t] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. 5. D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, 187.

[u] See NOTE XXXII.

SECTE IV.

vellers have involved the geography of Ptolemy, M. D'Anville has attempted to bring order; and, with much ingenuity, he has formed opinions with respect to some capital positions, which have the appearance of being well founded. The peninsula of Malacca is, according to him, the Golden Chersonesus of Ptolemy; but, instead of the direction which he has given it, we know that it bends some degrees towards the east, and that Cape de Romania, its southern extremity, is more than a degree to the north of the line. The Gulf of Siam he considers as the Great Bay of Ptolemy, but the position on the east side of that Bay, corresponding to Catigara, is actually as many degrees to the north of the Equator, as he supposed it to be south of it. Beyond this he mentions an inland city, to which he gives the name of Thinæ or Sinæ Metropolis. The longitude which he assigns to it, is one hundred and eighty degrees from his first meridian in the Fortunate Island, and is the utmost point towards the East to which the ancients had advanced by sea. Its latitude he calculates to be three degrees south of the line. If, with M. D'Anville, we conclude the situation of Sin-hoa, in the western part of the kingdom of Cochin-China, to be the same with Sinæ Metropolis, Ptolemy has

erred

erred in fixing its position no leſs than fifty degrees of longitude, and twenty degrees of latitude[x]. SECT. II.

These errors of Ptolemy concerning the remote parts of Aſia, have been rendered more conſpicuous by a miſtaken opinion of modern times ingrafted upon them. Sinæ, the moſt diſtant nation mentioned in his geography, has ſuch a near reſemblance in ſound to China, the name by which the greateſt and moſt civilized empire in the Eaſt is known to Europeans, that, upon their firſt acquaintance with it, they haſtily concluded them to be the ſame; and of conſequence it was ſuppoſed that China was known to the ancients, though no point ſeems to be more aſcertained, than that they never advanced by ſea beyond that boundary which I have allotted to their navigation.

Having thus traced the diſcoveries of India which the ancients made by ſea, I ſhall next examine what additional knowledge of that country they acquired from their progreſs

[x] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. D'Anville, Limites du Monde connues Anciens au-dela du Gange. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 604, &c. Ant. de l'Inde, Supplem. i. 161, &c. See NOTE XXXIII.

by

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SECT. III. by land. It appears (as I have formerly related) that there was a trade carried on early with India through the provinces that ſtretch along its northern frontier. Its various productions and manufactures were tranſported by land-carriage into the interior parts of the Perſian dominions, or were conveyed, by means of the navigable rivers, which flow through the Upper Aſia, to the Caſpian Sea and from that to the Euxine. While the ſucceſſors of Seleucus retained the dominion of the Eaſt, this continued to be the mode of ſupplying their ſubjects with the commodities of India. When the Romans had extended their conqueſts ſo far that the Euphrates was the Eaſtern limit of their empire, they found this trade ſtill eſtabliſhed, and as it opened to them a new communication with the Eaſt, by means of which they received an additional ſupply of luxuries, for which they had acquired the higheſt reliſh, it became an object of their policy to protect and encourage it. As the progreſs of the caravans or companies of merchants, which travelled towards the countries whence they received the moſt valuable manufactures, particularly thoſe of ſilk, was often interrupted, and rendered dangerous by the Parthians, who had acquired poſſeſſion of all the provinces which extend from the Caſpian Sea to that part of Scythia or Tartary which borders on China;

the

the Romans endeavoured to render this intercourſe more ſecure by a negociation with one of the monarchs of that great empire. Of this ſingular tranſaction there is, indeed, no veſtige in the Greek or Roman writers; our knowledge of it is derived entirely from the Chineſe hiſtorians, by whom we are informed that Antoun, (the Emperor Marcus Antoninus,) the king of the people of the Weſtern Ocean, ſent an embaſſy with this view to Oun-ti, who reigned over China in the hundred and ſixty-ſixth year of the Chriſtian æra[y]. What was the ſucceſs of this attempt is not known, nor can we ſay whether it facilitated ſuch an intercourſe between theſe two remote nations as contributed towards the ſupply of their mutual wants. The deſign certainly was not unworthy of the enlightened emperor of Rome to whom it is aſcribed. SECT. II.

It is evident, however, that in proſecuting this trade with China, a conſiderable part of the extenſive countries to the eaſt of the Caſpian Sea muſt have been traverſed; and though the chief inducement to undertake thoſe diſtant journies was gain, yet, in the courſe of ages,

[y] Memoire ſur les Liaiſons et le Commerce des Romains, avec les Tartares et les Chinois, par M. de Guignes. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 355, &c.

there

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SECT. II. there must have mingled among the adventurers, persons of curiosity and abilities, who could turn their attention from commercial objects to those of more general concern. From them such information was procured, and subjected to scientific discussion, as enabled Ptolemy to give a description of those inland and remote regions of Asia[z], fully as accurate as that of several countries, of which, from their vicinity, he may have been supposed to have received more distinct accounts. The farthest point towards the East, to which his knowledge of this part of Asia extended, is Sera Metropolis, which, from various circumstances, appears to have been in the same situation with Kant-cheou, a city of some note in Chen-si, the most westerly province of the Chinese empire. This he places in the longitude of one hundred and seventy-seven degrees fifteen minutes, near three degrees to the west of Sinæ Metropolis, which he had described as the utmost limit of Asia discovered by sea. Nor was Ptolemy's knowledge of this district of Asia confined only to that part of it through which the caravans may be supposed to have proceeded directly in their route eastward; he had received likewise some general information concerning various nations towards

[z] Lib. vi. c. 11–18.

the

the north, which, according to the position that he gives them, occupied parts of the great plain of Tartary, extending considerably beyond Lassa, the capital of Thibet, and the residence of the Dalai Lama. SECT. II.

THE latitudes of several places in this part of Asia are fixed by Ptolemy with such uncommon precision, that we can hardly doubt of their having been ascertained by actual observation. Out of many instances of this, I shall select three, of places situated in very different parts of the country under review. The latitude of Nagara, on the river Cophenes, (the modern Attock,) is, according to Ptolemy, thirty-two degrees and thirty minutes, which coincides precisely with the observation of an Eastern geographer quoted by M. D'Anville [a]. The latitude of Maracanda, or Samarcand, as fixed by him, is thirty-nine degrees fifteen minutes. According to the Astronomical Tables of Ulug Beg, the grandson of Timur, whose royal residence was in that city, it is thirty-nine degrees thirty-seven minutes [b]. The latitude of Sera Metropolis, in Ptolemy, is thirty-eight degrees fifteen minutes; that of Kant-cheou,

[a] Eclaircissements, &c. English Translation, p. 10.

[b] Tab. Geogr. ap. Hudson. Geogr. Minores, iii. 145.

as

SECT. II.

as determined by the Jeſuit Miſſionaries, is thirty-nine degrees. I have enumerated theſe ſtriking examples of the coincidence of his calculations with thoſe eſtabliſhed by modern obſervations, for two reaſons: One, becauſe they clearly prove that theſe remote parts of Aſia had been examined with ſome conſiderable degree of attention; the other, becauſe I feel great ſatisfaction, after having been obliged to mention ſeveral errors and defects in Ptolemy's geography, in rendering juſtice to a philoſopher, who has contributed ſo much towards the improvement of that ſcience. The facts which I have produced afford the ſtrongeſt evidence of the extent of his information, as well as the juſtneſs of his concluſions concerning countries with which, from their remote ſituation, we might have ſuppoſed him to be leaſt acquainted.

HITHERTO I have confined my reſearches concerning the knowledge which the ancients had of India, to the continent; I return now to conſider the diſcoveries which they had made, of the iſlands ſituated in various parts of the ocean with which it is ſurrounded, and begin, as I propoſed, with Taprobane, the greateſt and moſt valuable of them. This iſland lay ſo directly in the courſe of navigators who ventured beyond Cape Comorin, eſpecially when,

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according to the ancient mode of sailing, they seldom ventured far from the coast, that its position, one should have thought, must have been determined with the utmost precision. There is, however, hardly any point in the geography of the ancients more undecided and uncertain. Prior to the age of Alexander the Great, the name of Taprobane was unknown in Europe. In consequence of the active curiosity with which he explored every country that he subdued or visited, some information concerning it seems to have been obtained. From his time almost every writer on geography has mentioned it, but their accounts of it are so various, and often so contradictory, that we can scarcely believe them to be describing the same island. Strabo, the earliest writer now extant, from whom we have any particular account of it, affirms that it was as large as Britain, and situated at the distance of seven days, according to some reports, and according to other, of twenty days sailing from the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula; from which, contrary to what is known to be its real position, he describes it as stretching towards the west above five hundred stadia[c]. Pomponius Mela, the author next in order of time, is

SECT. II.

[c] Strabo, lib. ii. 124. B. 180. B. 192. A. lib. xv. 1012. B.

uncertain

SECT. II.

uncertain whether he ſhould conſider Taprobane as an iſland, or as the beginning of another world; but as no perſon, he ſays, had ever ſailed round it, he ſeems to incline towards the latter opinion [a]. Pliny gives a more ample deſcription of Taprobane, which, inſtead of bringing any acceſſion of light, involves every thing relating to it in additional obſcurity. After enumerating the various and diſcordant opinions of the Greek writers, he informs us, that ambaſſadors were ſent by a king of that iſland to the emperor Claudius, from whom the Romans learned ſeveral things concerning it, which were formerly unknown; particularly that there were five hundred towns in the iſland, and that in the centre of it there was a lake three hundred and ſeventy-five miles in circumference. Theſe ambaſſadors were aſtoniſhed at the ſight of the Great Bear and the Pleiades, being conſtellations which did not appear in their ſky; and were ſtill more amazed when they beheld their ſhadows point towards the north, and the ſun riſe on their left hand, and ſet on their right. They affirmed too, that in their country the moon was never ſeen, until the eighth day after the change, and continued to be viſible only to the ſixteenth [b]. It is ſurpriſing to find an author ſo intelligent

[a] De Situ Orbis, lib. iii. c. 7. [b] Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 22.

as Pliny relating all these circumstances without animadversion, and particularly that he does not take notice, that what the ambassadors reported concerning the appearance of the moon, could not take place in any region of the earth. SECT. II.

PTOLEMY, though so near to the age of Pliny, seems to have been altogether unacquainted with his description of Taprobane, or with the embassy to the emperor Claudius. He places that island opposite to Cape Comorin, at no great distance from the continent, and delineates it as stretching from north to south no less than fifteen degrees, two of which he supposes to be south of the Equator; and if his representation of its dimensions had been just, it was well entitled from its magnitude to be compared with Britain[7]. Agathemerus, who wrote after Ptolemy, and was well acquainted with his geography, considers Taprobane as the largest of all islands, and assigns to Britain only the second place[8].

FROM this diversity of the descriptions given by ancient writers, it is not surprising that the

[7] Ptol. lib. vii. c. 4. D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, p. 148.
[8] Lib. ii. c. 8. apud Hudson. Geogr. Minor. vol. ii.

SECT. II. moderns should have entertained very different sentiments with respect to the island in the Indian ocean which was to be considered as the same with the Taprobane of the Greeks and Romans. As both Pliny and Ptolemy describe it as lying in part to the south of the Equator, some learned men maintain Sumatra to be the island which corresponds to this description. But the great distance of Sumatra from the peninsula of India does not accord with any account which the Greek or Roman writers have given of the situation of Taprobane, and we have no evidence that the navigation of the ancients ever extended so far as Sumatra. The opinion more generally received is, that the Taprobane of the ancients is the island of Ceylon; and not only its vicinity to the continent of India, but the general form of the island, as delineated by Ptolemy, as well as the position of several places in it, mentioned by him, establish this opinion (notwithstanding some extraordinary mistakes, of which I shall afterwards take notice) with a great degree of certainty.

THE other islands to the east of Taprobane, mentioned by Ptolemy, might be shewn (if such a detail were necessary) to be the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Gulf of Bengal.

SECT. II.

AFTER this long, and, I am afraid, tedious inveſtigation of the progreſs made by the ancients, in exploring the different parts of India, and after tracing them as far as they advanced towards the Eaſt, either by ſea or land, I ſhall offer ſome general remarks concerning the mode in which their diſcoveries were conducted, and the degree of confidence with which we may rely on the accounts of them, which could not have been offered with the ſame advantage until this inveſtigation was finiſhed.

THE art of delineating maps, exhibiting either the figure of the whole earth, as far as it had been explored, or that of particular countries, was known to the ancients; and without the uſe of them to aſſiſt the imagination, it was impoſſible to have formed a diſtinct idea either of the one or of the other. Some of theſe maps are mentioned by Herodotus, and other early Greek writers. But no maps prior to thoſe which were formed in order to illuſtrate the geography of Ptolemy, have reached our times, in conſequence of which it is very difficult to conceive what was the relative ſituation of the different places mentioned by the ancient geographers, unleſs when it is preciſely aſcertained by meaſurement [h]. As ſoon how-

[h] See NOTE XXXIV.

SECT. II.

ever, as the mode of marking the situation of each place by specifying its longitude and latitude was introduced, and came to be generally adopted, every position could be described in compendious and scientific terms. But still the accuracy of this new method, and the improvement which geography derived from it, depends upon the mode in which the ancients estimated the latitude and longitude of places.

THOUGH the ancients proceeded in determining the latitude and longitude of places upon the same principles with the moderns, yet it was by means of instruments very inferior in their construction to those now used, and without the same minute attention to every circumstance that may affect the accuracy of an observation, an attention of which long experience only can demonstrate the necessity. In order to ascertain the latitude of any place, the ancients observed the meridian altitude of the sun, either by means of the shadow of a perpendicular gnomon, or by means of an astrolabe, from which it was easy to compute how many degrees and minutes the place of observation was distant from the Equator. When neither of these methods could be employed, they inferred the latitude of any place from the best accounts which they could procure of the length of its longest day.

WITH

SECT. II.

With respect to determining the longitude of any place, they were much more at a loss, as there was only one set of celestial phenomena to which they could have recourse. These were the eclipses of the moon (for those of the sun were not then so well understood as to be subservient to the purposes of geography); the difference between the time at which an eclipse was observed to begin or to end at two different places, gave immediately the difference between the meridians of those places. But the difficulty of making those observations with accuracy, and the impossibility of repeating them often, rendered them of so little use in geography, that the ancients in determining longitudes were obliged, for the most part, to have recourse to actual surveys, or to the vague information which was to be obtained from the reckonings of sailors, or the itineraries of travellers.

But though the ancients, by means of the operations which I have mentioned, could determine the position of places with a considerable degree of accuracy at land, it is very uncertain whether or not they had any proper mode of determining this at sea. The navigators of antiquity seem rarely to have had

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SECT. II.

recourse to astronomical observation. They had no instruments suited to a moveable and unsteady observatory; and though by their practice of landing frequently, they might, in some measure, have supplied that defect, yet no ancient author, as far as I know, has given an account of any astronomical observation made by them during the course of their voyages. It seems to be evident from Ptolemy, who employs some chapters in shewing how geography may be improved, and its errors may be rectified, from the reports of navigators[1], that all their calculations were founded solely upon reckoning, and were not the result of observation. Even after all the improvements which the moderns have made in the science of navigation, this mode of computing by reckoning is known to be so loose and uncertain, that, from it alone, no conclusion can be deduced with any great degree of precision. Among the ancients, this inaccuracy must have been greatly augmented, as they were accustomed in their voyages, instead of steering a direct course which might have been more easily measured, to a circuitous navigation along the coast; and were unacquainted with the compass, or any other instrument by which its bearings might have been

[1] Lib. I. c. 7—14.

ascer-

ascertained. We find, accordingly, the position of many places which we may suppose to have been determined at sea, fixed with little exactness. When, in consequence of an active trade, the ports of any country were much frequented, the reckonings of different navigators may have served in some measure to correct each other, and may have enabled geographers to form their conclusions with a nearer approximation to truth. But in remote countries, which have neither been the seat of military operations, nor explored by caravans travelling frequently through them, every thing is more vague and undefined, and the resemblance between the ancient descriptions of them, and their actual figure, is often so faint that it can hardly be traced. The latitude of places too, as might be expected, was in general much more accurately known by the ancients than their longitude. The observations by which the former was determined are simple, made with ease, and are not liable to much error. The other cannot be ascertained precisely, without more complex operations, and the use of instruments much more perfect than any that the ancients seem to have possessed[k]. Among the vast number of places, the position of which is fixed by

[k] See NOTE XXXV.

SECT. II.

Ptolemy, I know not if he approaches as near to truth in the longitude of any one, as he has done in fixing the latitude of the three cities which I formerly mentioned as a striking, though not singular, instance of his exactness.

THESE observations induce me to adhere to an opinion, which I proposed in another place[1], that the Greeks and Romans, in their commercial intercourse with India, were seldom led, either by curiosity or the love of gain, to visit the more eastern parts of it. A variety of particulars occur to confirm this opinion. Though Ptolemy bestows the appellation of *Emporia* on several places situated on the coast, which stretches from the eastern mouth of the Ganges to the extremity of the Golden Chersonesus, it is uncertain, whether from his having given them this name, we are to consider them as harbours frequented by ships from Egypt, or merely by vessels of the country. Beyond the Golden Chersonesus, it is remarkable that he mentions one *Emporium* only[m], which plainly indicates the intercourse with this region of India to have been very inconsiderable. Had voyages from the Arabian Gulf to those countries of India been as frequent, as to have en-

[1] Hist. of America, vol. i. p. 80. 315. [m] Lib. vii. c. 2.

titled

titled Ptolemy to ſpecify ſo minutely the longitude and latitude of the great number of places which he mentions, he muſt, in conſequence of this, have acquired ſuch information as would have prevented ſeveral great errors into which he has fallen. Had it been uſual to double Cape Comorin, and to ſail up the Bay of Bengal to the mouth of the Ganges, ſome of the ancient geographers would not have been ſo uncertain, and others ſo widely miſtaken, with reſpect to the ſituation and magnitude of the iſland of Ceylon. If the merchants of Alexandria had often viſited the ports of the Golden Cherſoneſus, and of the Great Bay, Ptolemy's deſcriptions of them muſt have been rendered more correſpondent to their real form, nor could he have believed ſeveral places to lie beyond the line, which are in truth ſome degrees on this ſide of it.

But though the navigation of the ancients may not have extended to the farther India, we are certain that various commodities of this country were imported into Egypt, and thence were conveyed to Rome, and to other parts of the Empire. From circumſtances which I have already enumerated, we are warranted in concluding, that theſe were brought in veſſels of the country to Muſiris, and to the other ports in the

SECT. III.

the Malabar coaſt, which were, at that period, the ſtaples of trade with Egypt. In a country of ſuch extent as India, where the natural productions are various, and greatly diverſified by art and induſtry, an active domeſtic commerce, both by ſea and by land, muſt have early taken place among its different provinces. Of this we have ſome hints in ancient authors; and where the ſources of information are ſo few and ſo ſcanty, we muſt reſt ſatisfied with hints. Among the different claſſes or caſts, into which the people of India were divided, merchants are mentioned as one[n], from which we may conclude trade to have been one of the eſtabliſhed occupations of men in that country. From the Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, we learn that the inhabitants of the Coromandel coaſt traded in veſſels of their own with thoſe of Malabar; that the interior trade of Barygaza was conſiderable; and that there was, at all ſeaſons, a number of country ſhips to be found in the harbour of Muſiris[o]. By Strabo we are informed, that the moſt valuable productions of Taprobane were carried to different *Emporia* of India[p]. In this way the traders from Egypt might be ſupplied with them, and thus could finiſh their voyages within

[n] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 22.

[o] Perip. Mar. Erythr. 34. 30.

[p] Lib. ii. 124. B.

the

the year, which must have been protracted much longer if they had extended as far towards the East as is generally supposed. SECT. III.

From all this it appears to be probable, that Ptolemy derived the information concerning the eastern parts of India, upon which he founds his calculations, not so much from any direct and regular intercourse between Egypt and these countries, as from the reports of a few adventurers, whom an enterprising spirit, or the love of gain, prompted to proceed beyond the usual limits of navigation.

Though, from the age of Ptolemy, the trade with India continued to be carried on in its former channel, and both Rome, the ancient capital of the empire, and Constantinople, the new seat of government, were supplied with the precious commodities of that country by the merchants of Alexandria, yet, until the reign of the emperor Justinian, we have no new information concerning the intercourse with the East by sea, or the progress which was made in the discovery of its remote regions. Under Justinian, Cosmas, an Egyptian merchant, in the course of his traffic, made some voyages to India, whence he acquired the surname of Indicopleustes; but afterwards, by a transition

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SECT. II.

not uncommon in that superstitious age, he renounced all the concerns of this life, and assumed the monastic character. In the solitude and leisure of a cell, he composed several works, one of which, dignified by him with the name of *Christian Topography*, has reached us. The main design of it is to combat the opinion of those philosophers, who assert the earth to be of a spherical figure, and to prove that it is an oblong plane, of twelve thousand miles in length from east to west, and of six thousand miles in breadth from north to south, surrounded by high walls, covered by the firmament as with a canopy or vault; that the vicissitude of day and night was occasioned by a mountain of prodigious height, situated in the extremities of the north, round which the sun moved; that when it appeared on one side of this mountain, the earth was illuminated, when concealed on the other side, the earth was left involved in darkness [q]. But amidst those wild reveries, more suited to the credulity of his new profession, than to the sound sense characteristic of that in which he was formerly engaged, Cosmas seems to relate what he himself had observed in his travels, or what he had learned from others, with great simplicity and regard for truth.

[q] Cosmas ap. Montfaucon Collect. Patrum, II. 113, &c. 138.

He

SECT. II.

He appears to have been well acquainted with the weſt coaſt of the Indian peninſula, and names ſeveral places ſituated upon it; he deſcribes it as the chief ſeat of the pepper trade, and mentions Male, in particular, as one of the moſt frequented ports on that account [t]. From Male, it is probable that this ſide of the continent has derived its modern name of Malabar; and the cluſter of iſlands contiguous to it, that of the Maldives. From him too we learn, that the iſland of Taprobane, which he ſuppoſes to lie at an equal diſtance from the Perſian Gulf on the weſt, and the country of the Sinæ on the eaſt, had become, in conſequence of this commodious ſituation, a great ſtaple of trade; that into it were imported the ſilk of the Sinæ, and the precious ſpices of the Eaſtern countries, which were conveyed thence to all parts of India, to Perſia, and to the Arabian Gulf. To this iſland he gives the name of Sieledība [u], nearly the ſame with that of Selendib, or Serendib, by which it is ſtill known all over the Eaſt.

To Coſmas we are alſo indebted for the firſt information of a new rival to the Romans in trade having appeared in the Indian ſeas. The

[t] Coſm. lib. ii. p. 138. lib. xi. 339. [u] Lib. xi. 336.

Perſians,

SECT. II.

Persians, after having overturned the empire of the Parthians, and re-established the line of their ancient monarchs, seem to have surmounted entirely the aversion of their ancestors to maritime exertion, and made early and vigorous efforts in order to acquire a share in the lucrative commerce with India. All its considerable ports were frequented by traders from Persia, who, in return for some productions of their own country in request among the Indians, received the precious commodities, which they conveyed up the Persian Gulf, and by means of the great rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, distributed them through every province of their empire. As the voyage from Persia to India was much shorter than that from Egypt, and attended with less expence and danger, the intercourse between the two countries increased rapidly. A circumstance is mentioned by Cosmas, which is a striking proof of this. In most of the cities of any note in India he found Christian churches established, in which the functions of religion were performed by priests ordained by the archbishop of Seleucia, the capital of the Persian empire, and who continued subject to his jurisdiction [1]. India appears to have been more thoroughly explored at this period, than it was in the age

[1] Cosm. lib. iii. p. 178.

of

of Ptolemy, and a greater number of ſtrangers ſeem to have been ſettled there. It is remarkable, however, that, according to the account of Coſmas, none of theſe ſtrangers were accuſtomed to viſit the eaſtern regions of Aſia, but teſted ſatisfied with receiving their ſilk, their ſpices, and other valuable productions, as they were imported into Ceylon, and conveyed thence to the various marts of India [u]. SECT. II.

THE frequency of open hoſtilities between the emperors of Conſtantinople and the monarchs of Perſia, together with the increaſing rivalſhip of their ſubjects in the trade with India, gave riſe to an event which produced a conſiderable change in the nature of that commerce. As the uſe of ſilk, both in dreſs and furniture, became gradually more general in the court of the Greek emperors, who imitated and ſurpaſſed the ſovereigns of Aſia in ſplendour and magnificence; and as China, in which, according to the concurring teſtimony of Oriental writers, the culture of ſilk was originally known [x], ſtill continued to be the only country which produced that valuable commodity: the Perſians, improving the advantages which their ſituation

[u] Lib. xi. 337. [x] Herbelot. Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Harir.*

gave

SECT. II.

gave them over the merchants from the Arabian Gulf, ſupplanted them in all the marts of India to which ſilk was brought by ſea from the Eaſt. Having it likewiſe in their power to moleſt or to cut off the caravans, which, in order to procure a ſupply for the Greek empire, travelled by land to China through the northern provinces of their kingdom, they entirely engroſſed that branch of commerce. Conſtantinople was obliged to depend on a rival power for an article which luxury viewed and deſired as eſſential to elegance. The Perſians, with the uſual rapacity of monopoliſts, raiſed the price of ſilk to ſuch an exorbitant height[r], that Juſtinian, eager not only to obtain a full and certain ſupply of a commodity which was become of indiſpenſable uſe, but ſolicitous to deliver the commerce of his ſubjects from the exactions of his enemies, endeavoured, by means of his ally, the Chriſtian monarch of Abyſſinia, to wreſt ſome portion of the ſilk trade from the Perſians. In this attempt he failed; but when he leaſt expected it, he, by an unforeſeen event, attained, in ſome meaſure, the object which he had in view. Two Perſian monks having been employed as miſſionaries in ſome of the Chriſtian churches, which were eſtabliſhed (as we are in-

A. D. 551.

[r] Procop. Hiſt. Arcan. c. 25.

formed

formed by Cosmas) in different parts of India, had penetrated into the country of the Seres, or China. There they observed the labours of the silk-worm, and became acquainted with all the arts of man in working up its productions into such a variety of elegant fabrics. The prospect of gain, or perhaps an indignant zeal, excited by seeing this lucrative branch of commerce engrossed by unbelieving nations, prompted them to repair to Constantinople. There they explained to the emperor the origin of silk, as well as the various modes of preparing and manufacturing it, mysteries hitherto unknown, or very imperfectly understood, in Europe; and encouraged by his liberal promises, they undertook to bring to the capital a sufficient number of those wonderful insects, to whose labours man is so much indebted. This they accomplished by conveying the eggs of the silk-worm in a hollow cane. They were hatched by the heat of a dunghill, fed with the leaves of a wild mulberry tree, and they multiplied and worked in the same manner as in those climates where they first became objects of human attention and care *. Vast numbers of these insects were soon reared in different parts of Greece, particularly in the Peloponesus. Sicily afterwards under-

SECT. II.

* Procop. de Bello Gothic. lib. iv. c. 17.

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SECT. II.

took to breed silk-worms with equal success, and was imitated, from time to time, in several towns of Italy. In all these places extensive manufactures were established, and carried on, with silk of domestic production. The demand for silk from the East diminished of course, the subjects of the Greek emperors were no longer obliged to have recourse to the Persians for a supply of it, and a considerable change took place in the nature of the commercial intercourse between Europe and India [a].

[a] See NOTE XXXVI.

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION III.

Intercourſe with India, from the Conqueſt of Egypt by the Mahomedans, to the Diſcovery of the Paſſage by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Eſtabliſhment of the Portugueſe Dominion in the Eaſt.

SECT. III.

ABOUT fourſcore years after the death of Juſtinian, an event happened, which occaſioned a revolution ſtill more conſiderable in the intercourſe of Europe with the Eaſt. Mahomet, by publiſhing a new religion, ſeems to have animated his countrymen with a new ſpirit, and to have called forth latent paſſions and talents into exertion. The greateſt part of the Arabians,

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SECT. III.

satisfied from the earliest times with national independence and personal liberty, tended their camels, or reared their palm-trees, within the precincts of their own peninsula, and had little intercourse with the rest of mankind, unless when they sallied out to plunder a caravan, or to rob a traveller. In some districts, however, they had begun to add the labours of agriculture, and the business of commerce, to the occupations of pastoral life[a]. These different orders of men, when prompted by the enthusiastic ardour with which the exhortations and example of Mahomet inspired them, displayed, at once, all the zeal of missionaries, and the ambition of conquerors. They spread the doctrine of their prophet, and extended the dominion of his successors, from the shores of the Atlantic to the frontier of China, with a rapidity of success to which there is nothing similar in the history of mankind. Egypt was one of their earliest conquests; and as they settled in that inviting country, and kept possession of it, the Greeks were excluded from all intercourse with Alexandria, to which they had long resorted as the chief mart of Indian goods. Nor was this the only effect which the progress of the Mahomedan arms had upon the commerce

A. C. 640.

[a] Sale's Koran. Prelim. Dis. p. 32, 33.

of

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of Europe with India. Prior to their invaſion of Egypt, the Arabians had ſubdued the great kingdom of Perſia, and added it to the empire of their Caliphs. They found their new ſubjects engaged in proſecuting that extenſive trade with India, and the country to the eaſt of it, the commencement and progreſs of which in Perſia I have already mentioned; and they were ſo ſenſible of the great advantages derived from it, that they became deſirous to partake of them. As the active powers of the human mind, when rouſed to vigorous exertions in one line, are moſt capable of operating with force in other directions; the Arabians, from impetuous warriors, ſoon became enterpriſing merchants. They continued to carry on the trade with India in its former channel from the Perſian Gulf, but it was with that ardour which characteriſes all the early efforts of Mahomet's followers. In a ſhort time they advanced far beyond the boundaries of ancient navigation, and brought many of the moſt precious commodities of the Eaſt directly from the countries which produced them. In order to engroſs all the profit ariſing from the ſale of them, the Caliph Omar [b], a few years after the conqueſt of Perſia, founded the city of Baſſora, on the

SECT. III.

[b] Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Baſrah*. Abul-Pharaſ. Hiſt. Dynaſt. p. 113.

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SECT. III.

western banks of the great ſtream formed by the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, with a view of ſecuring the command of theſe two rivers, by which goods imported from India were conveyed into all parts of Aſia. With ſuch diſcernment was the ſituation choſen, that Baſſora ſoon became a place of trade hardly inferior to Alexandria.

THIS general information with reſpect to the trade of the Arabians with India, which is all that can be derived from the hiſtorians of that period, is confirmed and illuſtrated by the Relation of a Voyage from the Perſian Gulf towards the Eaſt, written by an Arabian merchant in the year of the Chriſtian æra eight hundred and fifty-one, about two centuries after Perſia was ſubjected to the Caliphs, and explained by the Commentary of another Arabian, who had likewiſe viſited the Eaſtern parts of Aſia[c]. This curious Relation, which enables us to fill up a chaſm in the hiſtory of mercantile communication with India, furniſhes materials for deſcribing more in detail the extent of the Arabian diſcoveries in the Eaſt, and the manner in which they made them.

[c] See NOTE XXXVII.

THOUGH

SECT. III.

THOUGH ſome have imagined that the wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates ſuch virtue to a needle or ſlender rod of iron, as to make it point towards the poles of the earth, was known in the Eaſt long before it was obſerved in Europe, it is manifeſt, both from the Relation of the Mahomedan merchant, and from much concurring evidence, that not only the Arabians, but the Chineſe, were deſtitute of this faithful guide, and that their mode of navigation was not more adventrous than that of the Greeks and Romans [d]. They ſteered ſervilely along the coaſt, ſeldom ſtretching out to ſea ſo far as to loſe ſight of land, and as they ſhaped their courſe in this timid manner, their mode of reckoning was defective, and liable to the ſame errors which I obſerved in that of the Greeks and Romans [e].

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe diſadvantages, the progreſs of the Arabians towards the Eaſt extended far beyond the Gulf of Siam, the boundary of European navigation. They became acquainted with Sumatra, and the

[d] Relation, p. 2. 8, &c.

[e] Renaudot. Inquiry into the Time when the Mahomedans firſt entered China, p. 143.

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SECT. III.

other islands of the great Indian Archipelago, and advanced as far as the city of Canton in China. Nor are these discoveries to be considered as the effect of the enterprising curiosity of individuals; they were owing to a regular commerce carried on from the Persian Gulf with China, and all the intermediate countries. Many Mahomedans, imitating the example of the Persians described by Cosmas Indicopleustes, settled in India and the countries beyond it. They were so numerous in the city of Canton, that the emperor (as the Arabian authors relate) permitted them to have a Cadi or judge of their own sect, who decided controversies among his countrymen by their own laws, and presided in all the functions of religion[f]. In other places, proselytes were gained to the Mahomedan faith, and the Arabian language was understood and spoken in almost every sea-port of any note. Ships from China and different places of India traded in the Persian Gulf[g], and by the frequency of mutual intercourse, all the nations of the East became better acquainted with each other[h].

A STRIKING proof of this is the new information concerning China and India we receive from

[f] Relation, p. 7. Remarks, p. 19. Inquiry, p. 171, &c.
[g] See NOTE XXXVIII. [h] Relation, p. 8.

the

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the two authors I have mentioned. They point out the ſituation of Canton, now ſo well known to Europeans, with a conſiderable degree of exactneſs. They take notice of the general uſe of ſilk among the Chineſe. They are the firſt who mention their celebrated manufacture of porcelane, which, on account of its delicacy and tranſparency, they compare to glaſs [i]. They deſcribe the tea-tree, and the mode of uſing its leaves; and from the great revenue which was levied (as they inform us) from the conſumption of it, tea ſeems to have been as univerſally the favourite beverage of the Chineſe in the ninth century, as it is at preſent [k]. SECT. III.

Even with reſpect to thoſe parts of India which the Greeks and Romans were accuſtomed to viſit, the Arabians had acquired more perfect information. They mention a great empire eſtabliſhed on the Malabar coaſt, governed by monarchs whoſe authority was paramount to that of every power in India. Theſe monarchs were diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of *Balchara*, a name yet known in India [l], and it is probable that the Samorin, or emperor of Calicut, ſo frequently mentioned in the accounts of the firſt

[i] See NOTE XXXIX. [k] Relation, p. 21. 25.
[l] Herbelot. artic. *Hend.* & *Belhar.*

voyages

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SECT. III.

voyages of the Portugueſe to India, poſſeſſed ſome portion of their dominions. They celebrate the extraordinary progreſs which the Indians had made in aſtronomical knowledge, a circumſtance which ſeems to have been little known to the Greeks and Romans, and aſſert that in this branch of ſcience they were far ſuperior to the moſt enlightened nations of the Eaſt, on which account their ſovereign was denominated the King of Wiſdom[m]. Other peculiarities in the political inſtitutions, the mode of judicial proceedings, the paſtimes, and the ſuperſtitions of the Indians, particularly the excruciating mortifications and penances of the faquirs, might be produced as proofs of the ſuperior knowledge which the Arabians had acquired of the manners of that people.

The ſame commercial ſpirit, or religious zeal, which prompted the Mahomedans of Perſia to viſit the remoteſt regions of the Eaſt, animated the Chriſtians of that kingdom. The Neſtorian churches planted in Perſia, under the protection firſt of its native ſovereigns, and afterwards of its conquerors the Caliphs, were numerous, and governed by reſpectable eccleſiaſtics. They had early ſent miſſionaries into

[m] Relation, p. 37. 53.

India,

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India, and eſtabliſhed churches in different parts of it, particularly, as I have formerly related, in the Iſland of Ceylon. When the Arabians extended their navigation as far as China, a more ample field, both for their commerce and their zeal, opened to their view. If we may rely on the concurring evidence of Chriſtian authors, in the Eaſt as well as in the Weſt, confirmed by the teſtimony of the two Mahomedan travellers, their pious labours were attended with ſuch ſucceſs, that in the ninth and tenth centuries the number of Chriſtians in India and China was very conſiderable[n]. As the churches in both theſe countries received all their eccleſiaſtics from Perſia, where they were ordained by the *Catholicos*, or Neſtorian Primate, whoſe ſupremacy they acknowledged, this became a regular channel of intercourſe and intelligence; and to the combined effect of all theſe circumſtances, we are indebted for the information we receive from the two Arabians writers[o], concerning thoſe regions of Aſia, which the Greeks and Romans never viſited.

SECT. III.

But while both the Mahomedan and Chriſtian ſubjects of the Caliphs continued to extend their

[n] See NOTE XL. [o] Relation, p. 39.

knowledge

SECT. III.

knowledge of the Eaſt, the people of Europe found themſelves excluded almoſt entirely from any intercourſe with it. To them the great port of Alexandria was now ſhut, and the new lords of the Perſian Gulf, ſatisfied with ſupplying the demand for Indian commodities in their own extenſive dominions, neglected to convey them, by any of the uſual channels, to the trading towns on the Mediterranean. The opulent inhabitants of Conſtantinople, and other great cities of Europe, bore this deprivation of luxuries, to which they had been long accuſtomed, with ſuch impatience, that all the activity of commerce was exerted, in order to find a remedy for an evil which they deemed intolerable. The difficulties which were to be ſurmounted in order to accompliſh this, afford the moſt ſtriking proof of the high eſtimation in which the commodities of the Eaſt were held at that time. The ſilk of China was purchaſed in Chenſi, the weſternmoſt province of that empire, and conveyed thence by a caravan, in a march of eighty or a hundred days, to the banks of the Oxus, where it was embarked, and carried down the ſtream of that river to the Caſpian. After a dangerous voyage acroſs that ſea, and aſcending the river Cyrus as far as it is navigable, it was conducted by a ſhort land-

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carriage of five days to the river Phasis[p], which falls into the Euxine or Black Sea. Thence, by an easy and well known course, it was transported to Constantinople. The conveyance of commodities from that region of the East, now known by the name of Indostan, was somewhat less tedious and operose. They were carried from the banks of the Indus, by a route early frequented, and which I have already described, either to the river Oxus, or directly to the Caspian, from which they held the same course to Constantinople. SECT. III.

It is obvious, that only commodities of small bulk, and of considerable value, could bear the expence of such a mode of conveyance; and in regulating the price of those commodities, not only the expence, but the risk and danger of conveying them, were to be taken into account. In their journey across the vast plain extending from Samarcande to the frontier of China, caravans were exposed to the assaults and depredations of the Tartars, the Huns, the Turks, and other roving tribes which infest the north-east of Asia, and which have always considered the merchant and traveller as their lawful prey; nor were they exempt from insult and pillage in their

[p] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17.

journey

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SECT. III.

journey from the Cyrus to the Phaſis, through the kingdom of Colchis, a country noted, both in ancient and in modern times, for the thieviſh diſpoſition of its inhabitants. Even under all theſe diſadvantages, the trade with the Eaſt was carried on with ardour. Conſtantinople became a conſiderable mart of Indian and Chineſe commodities, and the wealth which flowed into it in conſequence of this, not only added to the ſplendour of that great city, but ſeems to have retarded, for ſome time, the decline of the empire of which it was the capital.

As far as we may venture to conjecture, from the imperfect information of contemporary hiſtorians, it was chiefly by the mode of conveyance which I have deſcribed, perilous and operoſe as it was, that Europe was ſupplied with the commodities of the Eaſt, during more than two centuries. Throughout that period the Chriſtians and Mahomedans were engaged in almoſt uninterrupted hoſtilities; proſecuted with all the animoſity which rivalſhip for power, heightened by religious zeal, naturally excites. Under circumſtances which occaſioned ſuch alienation, commercial intercourſe could hardly ſubſiſt, and the merchants of Chriſtendom either did not reſort at all to Alexandria, and the ports of Syria, the ancient ſtaples for the commodities of

of the East, after they were in possession of the Mahomedans, or if the love of gain, surmounting their abhorrence of the Infidels, prompted them to visit the marts which they had long frequented, it was with much caution and distrust. SECT. III.

While the difficulties of procuring the productions of the East were thus augmented, the people of Europe became more desirous of obtaining them. About this time some cities of Italy, particularly Amalphi and Venice, having acquired a greater degree of security or independence than they formerly possessed, began to cultivate the arts of domestic industry, with an ardour and ingenuity uncommon in the middle ages. The effect of these exertions was such an increase of wealth, as created new wants and desires, and formed a taste for elegance and luxury, which induced them to visit foreign countries in order to gratify it. Among men in this stage of their advancement, the productions of India have always been held in high estimation, and from this period they were imported into Italy in larger quantities, and came into more general use. Several circumstances which indicate this revival of a commercial spirit, are collected by the industrious Muratori, and, from the close of the seventh

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century, an attentive obſerver may diſcern faint traces of its progreſs [q].

Even in enlightened ages, when the tranſactions of nations are obſerved and recorded with the greateſt care, and the ſtore of hiſtorical materials ſeems to be abundantly ample, ſo little attention has been paid to the operations of commerce, that every attempt towards a regular deduction of them, has been found an undertaking of the utmoſt difficulty. The æra, however, to which I have conducted this Diſquiſition, is one of the periods in the annals of mankind concerning which hiſtory furniſhes moſt ſcanty information. As it was chiefly in the Greek empire, and in ſome cities of Italy, that any efforts were made to procure the commodities of India, and the other regions of the Eaſt, it is only from the Hiſtorians of thoſe countries we can expect to find any account of that trade. But from the age of Mahomet, until the time when the Comneni aſcended the throne of Conſtantinople, a period of more than four centuries and a half, the Byzantine hiſtory is contained in meagre chronicles, the com-

[q] Antiquit. Ital. medij Ævi, ii. 400. 408. 410. 883. 885. 894. Rer. Ital. Script. ii. 487. Hiſtoire du Commerce de la Ruſſie par M. Schérer. tom. i. p. 11. &c.

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pilers of which ſeldom extended their views beyond the intrigues in the palace, the factions in the theatre, or the diſputes of theologians. To them the monkiſh annaliſts of the different ſtates and cities of Italy, during the ſame period, are (if poſſible) far inferior in merit, and in the early accounts of thoſe cities which have been moſt celebrated for their commercial ſpirit, we ſearch with little ſucceſs for the origin or nature of that trade by which they firſt roſe to eminence[r]. It is manifeſt, however, from the ſlighteſt attention to the events which happened in the ſeventh and eighth centuries, that the Italian ſtates, while their coaſts were continually infeſted by the Mahomedans, who had made ſome ſettlements there, and had ſubjected Sicily almoſt entirely to their dominion, could not trade with much confidence and ſecurity in Egypt and Syria. With what implacable hatred Chriſtians viewed Mahomedans, as the diſciples of an impoſtor, is well known; and as all the nations which profeſſed the Chriſtian faith, both in the Eaſt and Weſt, had mingled the worſhip of angels and ſaints with that of the Supreme Being, and had adorned their churches with pictures and ſtatues; the true Moſlems conſidered themſelves as the only aſſertors of the

[r] See NOTE XLI.

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unity of God, and beheld Chriſtians of every denomination with abhorrence, as idolaters. Much time was requiſite to ſoften this mutual animoſity, ſo far as to render intercourſe in any degree cordial.

MEANWHILE a taſte for the luxuries of the Eaſt continued not only to ſpread in Italy, but, from imitation of the Italians, or from ſome improvement in their own ſituation, the people of Marſeilles, and other towns of France on the Mediterranean, became equally fond of them. But the profits exacted by the merchants of Amalphi or Venice, from whom they received thoſe precious commodities, were ſo exorbitant as prompted them to make ſome effort to ſupply their own demands. With this view, they not only opened a trade with Conſtantinople, but ventured at times to viſit the ports of Egypt and Syria[r]. This eagerneſs of the Europeans, on the one hand, to obtain the productions of India, and on the other hand, conſiderable advantages which both the Caliphs and their ſubjects derived from the ſale of them, induced both ſo far to conceal their reciprocal antipathy, as to carry on a traffic manifeſtly for their common benefit. How far this traffic extended, and

[r] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxvii. p. 467, &c. 483.

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in what mode it was conducted by these new adventurers, the scanty information which can be gathered from contemporary writers, does not enable me to trace with accuracy. It is probable, however, that this communication would have produced insensibly its usual effect, of familiarizing and reconciling men of hostile principles and discordant manners to one another, and a regular commerce might have been established gradually between Christians and Mahomedans, upon such equal terms, that the nations of Europe might have received all the luxuries of the East, by the same channels in which they were formerly conveyed to them, first by the Tyrians, then by the Greeks of Alexandria, next by the Romans, and at last by the subjects of the Constantinopolitan empire. SECT. III.

But whatever might have been the influence of this growing correspondence, it was prevented from operating with full effect by the Crusades, or expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, which, during two centuries, occupied the professors of the two rival religions, and contributed to alienate them more than ever from each other. I have, in another work [a],

[a] Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 26. edit. 1787.

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contemplated mankind while under the dominion of this frenzy, the moſt ſingular, perhaps, and the longeſt continued, of any that occurs in the hiſtory of our ſpecies; and I pointed out ſuch effects of it upon government, upon property, upon manners and taſte, as were ſuited to what were then the objects of my enquiry. At preſent my attention is confined to obſerve the commercial conſequences of the Cruſades, and how far they contributed to retard, or to promote, the conveyance of Indian commodities into Europe.

To fix an idea of peculiar ſanctity to that country, which the Author of our Religion ſelected as the place of his reſidence while on earth, and in which he accompliſhed the redemption of mankind, is a ſentiment ſo natural to the human mind, that, from the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, the viſiting of the holy places in Judea was conſidered as an exerciſe of piety, tending powerfully to awaken and to cheriſh a ſpirit of devotion. Through ſucceeding ages, the practice continued, and increaſed in every part of Chriſtendom. When Jeruſalem was ſubjected to the Mahomedan empire, and danger was added to the fatigue and expence of a diſtant pilgrimage, the undertaking was viewed as ſtill more meritorious.

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It was ſometimes enjoined as a penance to be performed by heinous tranſgreſſors. It was more frequently a duty undertaken with voluntary zeal, and in both caſes it was deemed an expiation for all paſt offences. From various cauſes, which I have elſewhere enumerated [t], theſe pious viſits to the Holy Land multiplied amazingly during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Not only individuals in the lower and middle ranks of life, but perſons of ſuperior condition, attended by large retinues, and numerous caravans of opulent pilgrims, reſorted to Jeruſalem.

In all their operations, however, men have a wonderful dexterity in mingling ſome attention to intereſt with thoſe functions which ſeem to be moſt purely ſpiritual. The Mahomedan caravans, which, in obedience to the injunctions of their religion, viſit the holy temple of Mecca, are not compoſed, as I ſhall hereafter explain more fully, of devout pilgrims only, but of merchants, who, both in going and returning, are provided with ſuch an aſſortment of goods, that they carry on a conſiderable traffic [u]. Even the Faquirs of India, whoſe wild enthuſiaſm

[t] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 27. 285.

[u] Viaggi di Ramuſio, vol. i. p. 151, 152.

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ſeems to elevate them above all ſolicitude about the concerns of this world, have rendered their frequent pilgrimages ſubſervient to their intereſt, by trading in every country through which they travel [x]. In like manner, it was not by devotion alone that ſuch numerous bands of Chriſtian pilgrims were induced to viſit Jeruſalem. To many of them commerce was the chief motive of undertaking that diſtant voyage, and by exchanging the productions of Europe for the more valuable commodities of Aſia, particularly thoſe of India, which at that time were diffuſed through every part of the Caliphs dominions, they enriched themſelves, and furniſhed their countrymen with ſuch an additional ſupply of Eaſtern luxuries, as augmented their reliſh for them [y].

BUT how faint ſoever the lines may be, which, prior to the Cruſades, mark the influence of the frequent pilgrimages to the Eaſt upon commerce, they become ſo conſpicuous after the commencement of theſe expeditions, as to meet the eye of every obſerver. Various circumſtances concurred towards this, from an enu-

[x] See NOTE XLII.

[y] Gul. Tyr. lib. xvii. c. 4. p. 933. ap. Geſta Dei per Francos.

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meration of which it will appear, that by attending to the progreſs and effects of the Cruſades, conſiderable light is thrown upon the ſubject of my inquiries. Great armies, conducted by the moſt illuſtrious princes and nobles of Europe, and compoſed of men of the moſt enterpriſing ſpirit in all the kingdoms of it, marched towards Paleſtine, through countries far advanced beyond thoſe which they left, in every ſpecies of improvement. They beheld the dawn of proſperity in the republics of Italy, which had begun to vie with each other in the arts of induſtry, and in their efforts to engroſs the lucrative commerce with the Eaſt. They next admired the more advanced ſtate of opulence and ſplendour in Conſtantinople, raiſed to a pre-eminence above all the cities then known, by its extenſive trade, particularly that which it carried on with India, and the countries beyond it. They afterwards ſerved in thoſe provinces of Aſia through which the commodities of the Eaſt were uſually conveyed, and became maſters of ſeveral cities which had been ſtaples of that trade. They eſtabliſhed the kingdom of Jeruſalem, which ſubſiſted near two hundred years. They took poſſeſſion of the throne of the Greek empire, and governed it above half a century. Amidſt ſuch a variety of events and operations, the ideas of the fierce warriors of Europe gradually

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opened and improved; they became acquainted with the policy and arts of the people whom they ſubdued; they obſerved the ſources of their wealth, and availed themſelves of all this knowledge. Antioch and Tyre, when conquered by the Cruſaders, were flouriſhing cities, inhabited by opulent merchants, who ſupplied all the nations trading in the Mediterranean with the productions of the Eaſt [z], and as far as can be gathered from incidental occurrences, mentioned by the Hiſtorians of the Holy War, who, being moſtly prieſts and monks, had their attention directed to objects very different from thoſe relating to commerce, there is reaſon to believe that both in Conſtantinople, while ſubject to the Franks, and in the ports of Syria acquired by the Chriſtians, the long-eſtabliſhed trade with the Eaſt continued to be protected and encouraged.

But though commerce may have been only a ſecondary object with the martial leaders of the Cruſades, engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with the Turks on one hand, and with the Soldans of Egypt on the other, it was the primary object with the aſſociates, in conjunction with whom

[z] Gul. Tyr. lib. xiii. c. 5. Alb. Aquenſ. Hiſt. Hieroſ. ap. Geſta Dei, vol. i. p. 247.

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they carried on their operations. Numerous as the armies were which assumed the cross, and enterprising as the fanatical zeal was with which they were animated, they could not have accomplished their purpose, or even have reached the seat of their warfare, without securing the assistance of the Italian states. None of the other European powers could either furnish a sufficient number of transports to convey the armies of the Crusaders to the coast of Dalmatia, whence they marched to Constantinople, the place of general rendezvous; or were able to supply them with military stores and provisions in such abundance as to enable them to invade a distant country. In all the successive expeditions the fleets of the Genoese, of the Pisans, or of the Venetians, kept on the coast as the armies advanced by land, and supplying them from time to time with whatever was wanting, engrossed all the profits of a branch of commerce, which, in every age, has been extremely lucrative. It was with all the interested attention of merchants, that the Italians afforded their aid. On the reduction of any place in which they found it for their interest to settle, they obtained from the Crusaders valuable immunities of different kinds; freedom of trade; an abatement of the usual duties paid for what was imported and exported, or a total exemption

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exemption from them; the property of entire ſuburbs in ſome cities, and of extenſive ſtreets in others; and a privilege granted to every perſon who reſided within their precincts, or who traded under their protection, of being tried by their own laws, and by judges of their own appointment [a]. In conſequence of ſo many advantages we can trace, during the progreſs of the Cruſades, a rapid increaſe of wealth and of power in all the commercial ſtates of Italy. Every port open to trade was frequented by their merchants, who, having now engroſſed entirely the commerce of the Eaſt, ſtrove with ſuch active emulation to find new markets for the commodities which it furniſhed, that they extended a taſte for them to many parts of Europe in which they had hitherto been little known.

Two events happened, prior to the termination of the Holy War, which, by acquiring to the Venetians and Genoeſe the poſſeſſion of ſeveral provinces in the Greek empire, enabled them to ſupply Europe more abundantly with all the productions of the Eaſt. The firſt was the conqueſt of Conſtantinople in the year one thouſand two hundred and four, by the

[a] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 34.

Venetians,

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Venetians, and the leaders of the fourth Cruſade. An account of the political intereſts and intrigues which formed this alliance, and turned the hallowed arms deſtined to deliver the Holy City from the dominion of infidels, againſt a Chriſtian monarch, is foreign from the deſign of this Diſquiſition. Conſtantinople was taken by ſtorm, and plundered by the confederates. An earl of Flanders was placed on the Imperial throne. The dominions which ſtill remained ſubject to the ſucceſſors of Conſtantine, were divided into four parts, one of which being allotted to the new emperor, for ſupporting the dignity and expence of government, an equal partition of the other three was made between the Venetians, and the chiefs of the Cruſade. The former, who, both in concerting and in conducting this enterpriſe, kept their eye ſteadily fixed on what might be moſt for the emolument of their commerce, ſecured the territories of greateſt value to a trading people. They obtained ſome part of the Peloponneſus, at that time the ſeat of flouriſhing manufactures, particularly of ſilk. They became maſters of ſeveral of the largeſt and beſt cultivated iſlands in the Archipelago, and eſtabliſhed a chain of ſettlements, partly military and partly commercial, extending from the Adriatic to the Boſpho-

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Bosphorus[b]. Many Venetians settled in Constantinople, and without obstruction from their warlike associates, little attentive to the arts of industry, they engrossed the various branches of trade which had so long enriched that capital. Two of these particularly attracted their attention; the silk trade, and that with India. From the reign of Justinian, it was mostly in Greece, and some of the adjacent islands, that silk-worms, which he first introduced into Europe, were reared. The product of their labours was manufactured into stuffs of various kinds in many cities of the empire. But it was in Constantinople, the seat of opulence and luxury, that the demand for a commodity of such high price was greatest, and there, of consequence, the commerce of silk naturally centered. In assorting cargoes for the several ports in which they traded, the Venetians had for some time found silk to be an essential article, as it continued to grow more and more into request in every part of Europe. By the residence of so many of their citizens in Constantinople, and by the immunities granted to them, they not only procured silk in such abundance, and

[b] Danduli Chronic. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. p. 328. Mar. Sanuto Vite de Duchi di Venez. Murat. vol. xxii. p. 532.

on

on ſuch terms, as enabled them to carry on trade more extenſively, and with greater profit than formerly, but they became ſo thoroughly acquainted with every branch of the ſilk manufacture, as induced them to attempt the eſtabliſhment of it in their own dominions. The meaſures taken for this purpoſe by individuals, as well as the regulations framed by the ſtate, were concerted with ſo much prudence, and executed with ſuch ſucceſs, that in a ſhort time the ſilk fabrics of Venice vied with thoſe of Greece and Sicily, and contributed both to enrich the republic, and to enlarge the ſphere of its commerce. At the ſame time, the Venetians availed themſelves of the influence which they had acquired in Conſtantinople, in order to improve their Indian trade. The capital of the Greek empire, beſides the means of being ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt, which it enjoyed in common with the other commercial cities of Europe, received a conſiderable portion of them by a channel peculiar to itſelf. Some of the moſt valuable commodities of India and China were conveyed over-land, by routes which I have deſcribed, to the Black Sea, and thence by a ſhort navigation to Conſtantinople. To this market, the beſt ſtored of any except Alexandria, the Venetians had now eaſy acceſs, and the goods which they purchaſed there, made

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an addition of great consequence to what they were accustomed to acquire in the ports of Egypt and Syria. Thus while the Latin empire in Constantinople subsisted, the Venetians possessed such advantages over all their rivals, that their commerce extended greatly, and it was chiefly from them every part of Europe received the commodities of the East.

THE other event which I had in view, was the subversion of the dominion of the Latins in Constantinople, and the re-establishment of the Imperial family on the throne. This was effected after a period of fifty-seven years, partly by a transient effort of vigour, with which indignation at a foreign yoke animated the Greeks, and partly by the powerful assistance which they received from the republic of Genoa. The Genoese were so sensible of the advantages which the Venetians, their rivals in trade, derived from their union with the Latin emperors of Constantinople, that, in order to deprive them of these, they surmounted the most deep-rooted prejudices of their age, and combined with the schismatic Greeks to dethrone a monarch protected by the Papal power, setting at defiance the thunders of the Vatican, which at that time made the greatest princes tremble. This undertaking, bold and impious as it was then deemed, proved successful. In recom-

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pence for their signal services, the gratitude or weakness of the Greek emperor, among other donations, bestowed upon the Genoese Pera, the chief suburb of Constantinople, to be held as a fief of the empire, together with such exemption from the accustomed duties on goods imported and exported, as gave them a decided superiority over every competitor in trade. With the vigilant attention of merchants, the Genoese availed themselves of this favourable situation. They surrounded their new settlement in Pera with fortifications. They rendered their factories on the adjacent coast places of strength [c]. They were masters of the harbour of Constantinople more than the Greeks themselves. The whole trade of the Black Sea came into their hands; and not satisfied with this, they took possession of part of the Chersonesus Taurica, the modern Crimæa, and rendered Caffa, its principal town, the chief seat of their trade with the East, and the port in which all its productions, conveyed to the Black Sea by the different routes I have formerly described, were landed [d].

[c] Niceph. Gregor. lib. xi. c. 1. § 6. lib. xvii. c. 1. § 2.

[d] Folieta Hist. Genuens. ap. Græv. Thes. Antiq. Ital. i. 387. De Marinis de Genuens. Dignit. ib. 1486. Niceph. Greg. lib. xiii. c. 12. Murat. Annal. d'Ital. lib. vii. c. 351. See NOTE XLIII.

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In conſequence of this revolution, Genoa became the greateſt commercial power in Europe; and if the enterpriſing induſtry and intrepid courage of its citizens had been under the direction of wiſe domeſtic policy, it might have long held that rank. But never was there a contraſt more ſtriking, than between the internal adminiſtration of the two rival republics of Venice and Genoa. In the former, government was conducted with ſteady ſyſtematic prudence; in the latter, it was conſiſtent in nothing but a fondneſs for novelty, and a propenſity to change. The one enjoyed a perpetual calm, the other was agitated with all the ſtorms and viciſſitudes of faction. The increaſe of wealth, which flowed into Genoa from the exertions of its merchants, did not counterbalance the defects in its political conſtitution; and even in its moſt proſperous ſtate we may diſcern the appearance of ſymptoms which foreboded a diminution of its opulence and power.

As long, however, as the Genoeſe retained the aſcendant which they had acquired in the Greek empire, the Venetians felt their commercial tranſactions with it to be carried on upon ſuch unequal terms, that their merchants viſited Conſtantinople ſeldom, and with reluctance;

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stance; and in order to procure the commodities of the East in such quantities as were demanded in the various parts of Europe which they were accustomed to supply, they were obliged to resort to the ancient staples of that trade. Of these Alexandria was the chief, and the most abundantly supplied, as the conveyance of Indian goods by land through Asia, to any of the ports of the Mediterranean, was often rendered impracticable by the incursions of Turks, Tartars, and other hordes, which successively desolated that fertile country, or contended for the dominion of it. But under the military and vigorous government of the Soldans of the Mameluks, security and order were steadily maintained in Egypt, and trade, though loaded with heavy duties, was open to all. In proportion to the progress of the Genoese in engrossing the commerce of Constantinople and the Black Sea [c], the Venetians found it more and more necessary to enlarge their transactions with Alexandria. SECT. III.

But such an avowed intercourse with infidels being considered, in that age, as unbecoming the character of Christians, the senate of Venice, in order to silence its own scruples, or those of its subjects, had recourse

[c] See NOTE XLIV.

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to the infallible authority of the Pope, who was ſuppoſed to be poſſeſſed of power to diſpenſe with the rigorous obſervation of the moſt ſacred laws, and obtained permiſſion from him to fit out annually a ſpecified number of ſhips for the ports of Egypt and of Syria [f]. Under this ſanction, the republic concluded a treaty of commerce with the Soldans of Egypt, on equitable terms; in conſequence of which the ſenate appointed one conſul to reſide in Alexandria, and another in Damaſcus, in a public character, and to exerciſe a mercantile juriſdiction, authoriſed by the Soldans. Under their protection, Venetian merchants and artiſans ſettled in each of theſe cities. Ancient prejudices and antipathies were forgotten, and their mutual intereſts eſtabliſhed, for the firſt time, a fair and open trade between Chriſtians and Mahomedans [g].

WHILE the Venetians and Genoeſe were alternately making thoſe extraordinary efforts, in order to engroſs all the advantages of ſupplying Europe with the productions of the Eaſt, the republic of Florence, originally a commercial democracy, applied with ſuch per-

[f] See NOTE XLV.

[g] Sandi Storia Civile Veneziana, lib. v. c. 15. p. 248, &c.

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fevering vigour to trade, and the genius of the people, as well as the nature of their inſtitutions, were ſo favourable to its progreſs, that the ſtate advanced rapidly in power, and the people in opulence. But as the Florentines did not poſſeſs any commodious ſea-port, their active exertions were directed chiefly towards the improvement of their manufactures, and domeſtic induſtry. About the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Florentine manufactures of various kinds, particularly thoſe of ſilk and woollen cloth, appear from the enumeration of a well-informed Hiſtorian, to have been very conſiderable [h]. The connection which they formed in different parts of Europe, by furniſhing them with the productions of their own induſtry, led them to engage in another branch of trade, that of banking. In this they ſoon became ſo eminent, that the money-tranſactions of almoſt every kingdom in Europe paſſed through their hands, and in many of them they were entruſted with the collection and adminiſtration of the public revenues. In conſequence of the activity and ſucceſs with which they conducted their manufactures and money-tranſ-

[h] Giov. Villani Hiſt. Florent. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiii. p. 823. Dell' Iſtorie Fiorentine, di Scip. Ammirato, lib. iv. p. 151. lib. viii. p. 299.

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actions, the former always attended with certain though moderate profit, the latter lucrative in an high degree, at a period when neither the intereſt of money, nor the premium on bills of exchange, were ſettled with accuracy, Florence became one of the firſt cities in Chriſtendom, and many of its citizens extremely opulent. Coſmo di Medici, the head of a family which roſe from obſcurity by its ſucceſs in trade, was reckoned the moſt wealthy merchant ever known in Europe[i]; and in acts of public munificence, as well as of private generoſity, in the patronage of learning, and in the encouragement of uſeful and elegant arts, no monarch of the age could vie with him. Whether the Medici, in their firſt mercantile tranſactions, carried on any commerce with the Eaſt, I have not been able to diſcover[k]. It is more probable, I ſhould think, that their trade was confined to the ſame articles with that of their countrymen. But as ſoon as the common-
A.C. 1405. wealth, by the conqueſt of Piſa, had acquired a communication with the ocean, Coſmo di Medici, who had the chief direction of its affairs,

[i] Fr. Mich. Brutus Hiſt. Flor. p. 37. 62. Chron. Eugubinum ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiv. p. 1007. Denina Revol. d'Italie, tom. vi. p. 263, &c.

[k] See NOTE XLVI.

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endeavoured to procure for his country a ſhare in that lucrative commerce, which had raiſed Venice and Genoa ſo far above all the other Italian ſtates. With this view ambaſſadors were ſent to Alexandria, in order to prevail with the Soldan to open that and the other ports of his dominions, to the ſubjects of the republic, and to admit them to a participation of all the commercial privileges which were enjoyed by the Venetians. The negociation terminated with ſuch ſucceſs, that the Florentines ſeem to have obtained ſome ſhare in the Indian trade[l]; and ſoon after this period, we find ſpices enumerated among the commodities imported by the Florentines into England[m].

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A. D. 1425.

In ſome parts of this Diſquiſition, concerning the nature and courſe of trade with the Eaſt, I have been obliged to grope my way, and often under the guidance of very feeble lights. But as we are now approaching to the period when the modern ideas, with reſpect to the importance of commerce, began to unfold, and attention to its progreſs and effects became a more conſiderable object of policy, we may hope to carry on what reſearches yet remain to be made, with greater certainty and preciſion. To this growing attention we are in-

[l] See NOTE XLVII. [m] Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 193.

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debted for the account which Marino Sanudo, a Venetian nobleman, gives of the Indian trade, as carried on by his countrymen, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. They were ſupplied, as he informs us, with the productions of the Eaſt in two different ways. Thoſe of ſmall bulk and high value, ſuch as cloves, nutmegs, mace, gems, pearls, &c. were conveyed from the Perſian gulf up the Tigris to Baſſora, and thence to Bagdat, from which they were carried to ſome port on the Mediterranean. All more bulky goods, ſuch as pepper, ginger, cinnamon, &c. together with ſome portion of the more valuable articles, were conveyed by the ancient route to the Red Sea, and thence acroſs the deſart, and down the Nile, to Alexandria. The goods received by the former route were, as Sanudo obſerves, of ſuperior quality, but from the tedioufneſs and expence of a diſtant land-carriage, the ſupply was often ſcanty, nor can he conceal (though contrary to a favourite project which he had in view when he wrote the treatiſe to which I refer) that, from the ſtate of the countries through which the caravans paſſed, this mode of conveyance was frequently precarious, and attended with danger[n].

[n] Mar. Sanuti Secreta Fidelium Crucis, p. 22, &c. ap. Bongarſium.

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It was in Alexandria only that the Venetians found always a certain and full ſupply of Indian goods; and as theſe were conveyed thither chiefly by water-carriage, they might have purchaſed them at a moderate price, if the Soldans had not impoſed upon them duties which amounted to a third part of their full value. Under this and every other diſadvantage, however, it was neceſſary to procure them, as from many concurring circumſtances, particularly a more extenſive intercourſe eſtabliſhed among the different nations of Europe, the demand for them continued to increaſe greatly during the fourteenth century. By the irruptions of the various hoſtile tribes of Barbarians, who took poſſeſſion of the greater part of Europe, that powerful bond by which the Romans had united together all the people of their vaſt empire was entirely diſſolved, and ſuch diſcouragement was given to the communication of one nation with another, as would appear altogether incredible, if the evidence of it reſted only upon the teſtimony of hiſtorians, and were not confirmed by what is ſtill more authentic, the expreſs enactment of laws. Several ſtatutes of this kind, which diſgrace the juriſprudence of almoſt every European nation, I have enumerated and explained in another work*. But

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 92. 291, &c.

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SECT. III. when the wants and desires of men multiplied, and they found that other countries could furnish the means of supplying and gratifying them, the hostile sentiments which kept nations at a distance from each other abated, and mutual correspondence gradually took place. From the time of the Crusades, which first brought people hardly known to one another, to associate, and to act in concert during two centuries, in pursuit of one common end, several circumstances had co-operated towards accelerating this general intercourse. The people around the Baltic, hitherto dreaded and abhorred by the rest of Europe as pirates and invaders, assumed more pacific manners, and began now to visit their neighbours as merchants. Occurrences foreign from the subject of the present inquiry, united them together in the powerful commercial confederacy so famous in the middle ages, under the name of the Hanseatic League, and led them to establish the staple of their trade with the southern parts of Europe in Bruges. Thither the merchants of Italy, particularly those of Venice, resorted; and in return for the productions of the East, and the manufactures of their own country, they received not only the naval stores and other commodities of the North, but a considerable supply of gold and silver from the mines in various provinces of Germany, the most

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moſt valuable and productive of any known at that time in Europe [p]. Bruges continued to be the great mart or ſtorehouſe of European trade during the period to which my inquiries extend. A regular communication, formerly unknown, was kept up there among all the kingdoms into which our continent is divided, and we are enabled to account for the rapid progreſs of the Italian ſtates in wealth and power, by obſerving how much their trade, the ſource from which both were derived, muſt have augmented upon the vaſt increaſe in the conſumption of Aſiatic goods, when all the extenſive countries towards the north-eaſt of Europe were opened for their reception.

During this proſperous and improving ſtate of Indian commerce, Venice received from one of its citizens ſuch new information concerning the countries which produced the precious commodities that formed the moſt valuable article of its trade, as gave an idea of their opulence, their population, and their extent, which roſe far above all the former conceptions of Europeans. From the time that the Mahomedans became maſters of Egypt, as no chriſtian was permitted to paſs through their do-

[p] Zimmermann's Polit. Survey of Europe, p. 102.

minions

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minions to the East[q], the direct intercourse of Europeans with India ceased entirely. The account of India by Cosmas Indico-pleustes in the sixth century, is, as far as I know, the last which the nations of the West received from any person who had visited that country. But about the middle of the thirteenth century, the spirit of commerce, now become more enterprising, and more eager to discover new routes which led to wealth, induced Marco Polo, a Venetian of a noble family, after trading for some time in many of the opulent cities of the Lesser Asia, to penetrate into the more eastern parts of that continent, as far as to the court of the Great Khan on the frontier of China. During the course of twenty-six years, partly employed in mercantile transactions, and partly in conducting negociations with which the Great Khan entrusted him, he explored many regions of the East which no European had ever visited.

He describes the great kingdom of Cathay, the name by which China is still known in many parts of the East[r], and travelled through

[q] Sanuto, p. 23.

[r] Herbelot Bib. Orient. artic. *Khathai.* Stewart, Account of Thibet, Phil. Transf. lxvii. 474. Voyage of A. Jenkinson, Hakluyt. i. 333.

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it from Chambalu, or Peking, on its northern frontier, to ſome of its moſt ſouthern provinces. He viſited different parts of Indoſtan, and is the firſt who mentions Bengal and Guzzerat, by their preſent names, as great and opulent kingdoms. Beſides what he diſcovered in his journies by land, he made more than one voyage in the Indian ocean, and acquired ſome information concerning an iſland which he calls Zipangri or Cipango, probably Japan. He viſited in perſon Java, Sumatra, and ſeveral iſlands contiguous to them, the iſland of Ceylon, and the coaſt of Malabar as far as the Gulf of Cambay, to all which he gives the names that they now bear. This was the moſt extenſive ſurvey hitherto made of the Eaſt, and the moſt complete deſcription of it ever given by any European; and, in an age which had hardly any knowledge of thoſe regions but what was derived from the geography of Ptolemy, not only the Venetians, but all the people of Europe, were aſtoniſhed at the diſcovery of immenſe countries open to their view beyond what had hitherto been reputed the utmoſt boundary of the earth in that quarter[a].

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But while men of leiſure and ſpeculation occupied themſelves with examining the diſ-

[a] See NOTE XLVIII.

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coveries of Marco Polo, which gave rise to conjectures and theories, productive of moſt important conſequences; an event happened, that drew the attention of all Europe, and had a moſt conſpicuous effect upon the courſe of that trade, the progreſs of which I am endeavouring to trace.

The event to which I allude, is the final conA. D. 1453. queſt of the Greek empire by Mahomet II. and the eſtabliſhing the ſeat of the Turkiſh government in Conſtantinople. The immediate effect of this great revolution was, that the Genoeſe reſiding in Pera, involved in the general calamity, were obliged not only to abandon that ſettlement, but all thoſe which they had made on the adjacent ſea-coaſt, after they had been in their poſſeſſion near two centuries. Not long after, the victorious arms of A. D. 1474. the Sultan expelled them from Caffa, and every other place which they held in the Crimea[t]. Conſtantinople was no longer a mart open to the nations of the Weſt for Indian commodities, and no ſupply of them could now be obtained but in Egypt and the ports of Syria, ſubject to the Soldans of the Mameluks. The Venetians, in conſequence of the pro-

[t] Folieta Hiſt. Genu. 602. 626. Murat. Annali d'Ital. ix. 451.

tection

tection and privileges which they had secured by their commercial treaty with thoſe powerful princes, carried on trade in every part of their dominions with ſuch advantage, as gave them a ſuperiority over every competitor. Genoa, which had long been their moſt formidable rival, humbled by the loſs of its poſſeſſions in the Eaſt, and weakened by domeſtic diſſenſions, declined ſo faſt, that it was obliged to court foreign protection, and ſubmitted alternately to the dominion of the Dukes of Milan and the Kings of France. In conſequence of this diminution of their political power, the commercial exertions of the Genoeſe became leſs vigorous. A feeble attempt which they made to recover that ſhare of the Indian trade which they had formerly enjoyed, by offering to enter into treaty with the Soldans of Egypt upon terms ſimilar to thoſe which had been granted to the Venetians, proved unſucceſsful; and during the remainder of the fifteenth century, Venice ſupplied the greater part of Europe with the productions of the Eaſt, and carried on trade to an extent far beyond what had been known in thoſe times. SECT. III.

The ſtate of the other European nations was extremely favourable to the commercial progreſs

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progreſs of the Venetians. England, deſolated by the civil wars which the unhappy conteſt between the houſes of York and Lancaſter excited, had hardly begun to turn its attention towards thoſe objects and purſuits to which it is indebted for its preſent opulence and power. In France, the fatal effects of the Engliſh arms and conqueſts were ſtill felt, and the king had neither acquired power, nor the people inclination, to direct the national genius and activity to the arts of peace. The union of the different kingdoms of Spain was not yet completed; ſome of its moſt fertile provinces were ſtill under the dominion of the Moors, with whom the Spaniſh monarchs waged perpetual war; and, except by the Catalans, little attention was paid to foreign trade. Portugal, though it had already entered upon that career of diſcovery which terminated with moſt ſplendid ſucceſs, had not yet made ſuch progreſs in it as to be entitled to any high rank among the commercial ſtates of Europe. Thus the Venetians, almoſt without rival or competitor, except from ſome of the inferior Italian ſtates, were left at liberty to concert and to execute their mercantile plans; and their trade with the cities of the Hanſeatic League, which united the North and South of Europe, and which hitherto had

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had been common to all the Italians, was now engroſſed, in a great meaſure, by them alone. SECT. III.

WHILE the increaſing demand for the productions of Aſia induced all the people of Europe to court intercourſe with the Venetians ſo eagerly, as to allure them, by various immunities, to frequent their ſea-ports, we may obſerve a peculiarity in their mode of carrying on trade with the Eaſt, which diſtinguiſhes it from what has taken place in other countries in any period of hiſtory. In the ancient world, the Tyrians, the Greeks who were maſters of Egypt, and the Romans, ſailed to India in queſt of thoſe commodities with which they ſupplied the people of the Weſt. In modern times, the ſame has been the practice of the Portugueſe, the Dutch, the Engliſh, and, after their example, of other European nations. In both periods loud complaints have been made, that in carrying on this trade every ſtate muſt be drained of the precious metals, which, in the courſe of it flow inceſſantly from the Weſt to the Eaſt, never to return. From whatever loſs might have been occaſioned by this gradual but unavoidable diminution of their gold and ſilver, (whether a real or only an imaginary loſs, it is not incumbent upon me in this place to inquire or to determine,) the Venetians were, in a great meaſure,

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measure, exempted. They had no direct intercourse with India. They found in Egypt, or in Syria, warehouses filled with all the commodities of the East, imported by the Mahomedans; and from the best accounts we have, with respect to the nature of their trade, they purchased them more frequently by barter, than with ready money. Egypt, the chief mart for Indian goods, though a most fertile country, is destitute of many things requisite in an improved state of society, either for accommodation or for ornament. Too limited in extent, and too highly cultivated to afford space for forests; too level to have mines of the useful metals; it must be supplied with timber for building, with iron, lead, tin, and brass, by importation from other countries. The Egyptians, while under the dominion of the Mameluks, seem not themselves to have traded in the ports of any Christian state, and it was principally from the Venetians, that they received all the articles which I have enumerated. Besides these, the ingenuity of the Venetian artists furnished a variety of manufactures of woollen cloths, silk stuffs of various fabric, camblets, mirrors, arms, ornaments of gold and silver, glass, and many other articles, for all which they found a ready market in Egypt and Syria. In return they received from the merchants of Alexandria, spices of every kind, drugs, gems, pearls, ivory, cotton

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and silk, unwrought as well as manufactured, in many different forms, and other productions of the East, together with several valuable articles of Egyptian growth or fabric. In Aleppo, Baruth, and other cities, besides the proper commodities of India brought thither by land, they added to their cargoes the carpets of Persia, the rich wrought silks of Damascus, still known by a name taken from that city, and various productions of art and nature peculiar to Syria, Palestine, and Arabia. If, at any time, their demand for the productions of the East went beyond what they could procure in exchange for their own manufactures, that trade with the cities of the Hanseatic League, which I have mentioned, furnished them from the mines of Germany, with a regular supply of gold and silver, which they could carry, with advantage, to the markets of Egypt and Syria. SECT. III.

From a propensity, remarkable in all commercial states, to subject the operations of trade to political regulation and restraint, the authority of the Venetian government seems to have been interposed, both in directing the importation of Asiatic goods, and in the mode of circulating them among the different nations of Europe. To every considerable staple in the Mediterranean a certain number of large vessels,

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known by the name of *Galeons* or *Caracks*, was fitted out on the public account, and returned loaded with the richeſt merchandiſe[u], the profit ariſing from the ſale of which muſt have been no ſlender addition to the revenue of the republic. Citizens, however, of every claſs, particularly perſons of noble families, were encouraged to engage in foreign trade, and whoever employed a veſſel of a certain burden for this purpoſe, received a conſiderable bounty from the ſtate[x]. It was in the ſame manner, partly in ſhips belonging to the public, and partly in thoſe of private traders, that the Venetians circulated through Europe the goods imported from the Eaſt, as well as the produce of their own dominions and manufactures.

THERE are two different ways by which we may come at ſome knowledge of the magnitude of thoſe branches of commerce carried on by the Venetians. The one, by attending to the great variety and high value of the commodities which they imported into Bruges, the ſtore-houſe from which the more northern nations of Europe were ſupplied. A full enumeration

[u] Sabellicus, Hiſt. Rer. Venet. Dec. iv. lib. iii. p. 868. Denina Revol. d'Italie, tom. vi. 340.

[x] Sandi Stor. Civ. Venez. lib. viii. 891.

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of theſe is given by a well-informed author, in which is contained almoſt every article deemed in that age eſſential to accommodation or to elegance [y]. The other, by conſidering the effects of the Venetian trade upon the cities admitted to a participation of its advantages. Never did wealth appear more conſpicuouſly in the train of commerce. The citizens of Bruges, enriched by it, diſplayed in their dreſs, their buildings, and mode of living, ſuch magnificence as even to mortify the pride and excite the envy of royalty [z]. Antwerp, when the ſtaple was removed thither, ſoon rivalled Bruges in opulence and ſplendour. In ſome cities of Germany, particularly in Augſburg, the great mart for Indian commodities in the interior parts of that extenſive country, we meet with early examples of ſuch large fortunes accumulated by mercantile induſtry, as raiſed the proprietors of them to high rank and conſideration in the empire.

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FROM obſerving this remarkable increaſe of opulence in all the places where the Venetians had an eſtabliſhed trade, we are led to conclude, that the profit accruing to themſelves

[y] Lud. Guicciardini Deſcript. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 173.
[z] See NOTE XLIX.

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from the different branches of it, especially that with the East, must have been still more considerable. It is impossible, however, without information much more minute than that to which we have access, to form an estimate of this with accuracy; but various circumstances may be produced to establish, in general, the justness of this conclusion. From the first revival of a commercial spirit in Europe, the Venetians possessed a large share of the trade with the East. It continued gradually to increase, and during a great part of the fifteenth century, they had nearly a monopoly of it. This was productive of consequences attending all monopolies. Wherever there is no competition, and the merchant has it in his power to regulate the market, and to fix the price of the commodities which he vends, his gains will be exorbitant. Some idea of their magnitude, during several centuries, may be formed by attending to the rate of the premium or interest then paid for the use of money. This is undoubtedly the most exact standard by which to measure the profit arising from the capital stock employed in commerce; for, according as the interest of money is high or low, the gain acquired by the use of it must vary, and become excessive or moderate. From the close of the eleventh century to the commencement

of

of the ſixteenth, the period during which the Italians made their chief commercial exertions, the rate of intereſt was extremely high. It was uſually twenty per cent. ſometimes above that; and ſo late as the year one thouſand five hundred, it had not ſunk below ten or twelve per cent. in any part of Europe [a]. If the profits of a trade ſo extenſive as that of the Venetians correſponded to this high value of money, it could not fail of proving a ſource of great wealth, both public and private [b]. The condition of Venice, accordingly, during the period under review, is deſcribed by writers of that age, in terms which are not applicable to that of any other country in Europe. The revenues of the republic, as well as the wealth amaſſed by individuals, exceeded whatever was elſewhere known. In the magnificence of their houſes, in richneſs of furniture, in profuſion of plate, and in every thing which contributed either towards elegance or parade in their mode of living, the nobles of Venice ſurpaſſed the ſtate of the greateſt monarchs beyond the Alps. Nor was all this diſplay the effect of an oſtentatious and inconſiderate diſſipation, it was the natural conſequence of ſucceſsful induſtry, which, having

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[a] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 401, &c.
[b] See NOTE L.

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accumulated wealth with eaſe, is entitled to enjoy it in ſplendour[c].

NEVER did the Venetians believe the power of their country to be more firmly eſtabliſhed, or rely with greater confidence on the continuance and increaſe of its opulence, than towards the cloſe of the fifteenth century, when two events (which they could neither foreſee nor prevent) happened, that proved fatal to both. The one was the diſcovery of America. The other was the opening a direct courſe of navigation to the Eaſt Indies, by the Cape of Good Hope. Of all occurrences in the hiſtory of the human race, theſe are undoubtedly among the moſt intereſting; and as they occaſioned a remarkable change of intercourſe among the different quarters of the globe, and finally eſtabliſhed thoſe commercial ideas and arrangements which conſtitute the chief diſtinction between the manners and policy of ancient and of modern times, an account of them is intimately connected with the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will bring it to that period which I have fixed upon for its boundary. But as I have related the riſe and progreſs of theſe diſcoveries at great length in another

[c] See NOTE LI.

work,

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work[d], a rapid view of them is all that is requiſite in this place. SECT. III.

THE admiration or envy with which the other nations of Europe beheld the power and wealth of Venice, led them naturally to enquire into the cauſes of this pre-eminence; and among theſe, its lucrative commerce with the Eaſt appeared to be by far the moſt conſiderable. Mortified with being excluded from a ſource of opulence, which to the Venetians had proved ſo abundant, different countries had attempted to acquire a ſhare of the Indian trade. Some of the Italian ſtates endeavoured to obtain admiſſion into the ports of Egypt and Syria, upon the ſame terms with the Venetians; but either by the ſuperior intereſt of the Venetians in the court of the Soldans, their negociations for that purpoſe were rendered unſucceſsful? or from the manifold advantages which merchants, long in poſſeſſion of any branch of trade, have in a competition with new adventurers, all their exertions did not produce effects of any conſequence[e]. In other countries, various ſchemes were formed with the ſame view. As early as the year one thouſand four hundred and eighty, the inventive and enterpriſing genius of Columbus conceived

[d] Hiſt. of America, Books I. and II.
[e] See NOTE LII.

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the idea of opening a ſhorter and more certain communication with India, by holding a direct weſterly courſe towards thoſe regions, which, according to Marco Polo and other travellers, extended eaſtward far beyond the utmoſt limits of Aſia known to the Greeks or Romans. This ſcheme, ſupported by arguments deduced from a ſcientific acquaintance with coſmography, from his own practical knowledge of navigation, from the reports of ſkilful pilots, and from the theories and conjectures of the ancients, he propoſed firſt to the Genoeſe his countrymen, and next to the king of Portugal, into whoſe ſervice he had entered. It was rejected by the former from ignorance, and by the latter with circumſtances moſt humiliating to a generous mind. By perſeverance, however, and addreſs, he at length induced the moſt wary and leaſt adventurous court in Europe to undertake the execution of his plan; and Spain, as the reward of this deviation from its uſual cautious maxims, had the glory of diſcovering a new world, hardly inferior in magnitude to a third part of the habitable globe. Aſtoniſhing as the ſucceſs of Columbus was, it did not fully accompliſh his own wiſhes, or conduct him to thoſe regions of the Eaſt, the expectation of reaching which was the original object of his voyage. The effects, however, of his diſcoveries

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coveries were great and extenſive. By giving Spain the poſſeſſion of immenſe territories, abounding in rich mines, and many valuable productions of nature, ſeveral of which had hitherto been deemed peculiar to India, wealth began to flow ſo copiouſly into that kingdom, and thence was ſo diffuſed over Europe, as gradually awakened a general ſpirit of induſtry, and called forth exertions, which alone muſt have ſoon turned the courſe of commerce into new channels. SECT. III.

But this was accompliſhed more ſpeedily, as well as more completely, by the other great event which I mentioned, the diſcovery of a new route of navigation to the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope. When the Portugueſe, to whom mankind are indebted for opening this communication between the moſt remote parts of the habitable globe, undertook their firſt voyage of diſcovery, it is probable that they had nothing farther in view than to explore thoſe parts of the coaſt of Africa which lay neareſt to their own country. But a ſpirit of enterpriſe, when rouſed and put in motion, is always progreſſive; and that of the Portugueſe, though ſlow and timid in its firſt operations, gradually acquired vigour, and prompted them to advance along the weſtern ſhore of the African

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continent, far beyond the utmoſt boundary of ancient navigation in that direction. Encouraged by ſucceſs, this ſpirit became more adventurous, deſpiſed dangers which formerly appalled it, and ſurmounted difficulties which it once deemed inſuperable. When the Portugueſe found in the torrid zone, which the ancients had pronounced to be uninhabitable, fertile countries, occupied by numerous nations; and perceived that the continent of Africa, inſtead of extending in breadth towards the Weſt, according to the opinion of Ptolemy, appeared to contract itſelf, and to bend Eaſtwards, more extenſive proſpects opened to their view, and inſpired them with hopes of reaching India, by continuing to hold the ſame courſe which they had ſo long purſued.

After ſeveral unſucceſsful attempts to accompliſh what they had in view, a ſmall ſquadron ſailed from the Tagus, under the command of Vaſco de Gama, an officer of rank, whoſe abilities and courage fitted him to conduct the moſt difficult and arduous enterpriſes. From unacquaintance, however, with the proper ſeaſon and route of navigation in that vaſt ocean through which he had to ſteer his courſe, his voyage was long and dangerous. At length he doubled that promontory, which, for ſeveral years, had been

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been the object of terror and of hope to his countrymen. From that, after a prosperous navigation along the south-east of Africa, he arrived at the city of Melinda, and had the satisfaction of discovering there, as well as at other places where he touched, people of a race very different from the rude inhabitants of the Western shore of that continent, which alone the Portuguese had hitherto visited. These he found to be so far advanced in civilization, and acquaintance with the various arts of life, that they carried on an active commerce, not only with the nations on their own coast, but with remote countries of Asia. Conducted by their pilots, who held a course (with which experience had rendered them well acquainted) he sailed across the Indian ocean, and landed at Calecut, on the coast of Malabar on the twenty-second of May, one thousand four hundred and ninety-eight, ten months and two days after his departure from the port of Lisbon.

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The Samorin, or Monarch of the country, astonished at this unexpected visit of an unknown people, whose aspect, and arms, and manners, bore no resemblance to any of the nations accustomed to frequent his harbours, and who arrived in his dominions by a route hitherto

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hitherto deemed impracticable, received them, at firſt, with that fond admiration which is often excited by novelty. But in a ſhort time, as if he had been inſpired with foreſight of all the calamities now approaching India by this fatal communication opened with the inhabitants of Europe, he formed various ſchemes to cut off Gama and his followers. But from every danger to which he was expoſed, either by the open attacks or ſecret machination of the Indians, the Portugueſe Admiral extricated himſelf with ſingular prudence and intrepidity, and at laſt ſailed from Calecut with his ſhips loaded, not only with the commodities peculiar to that coaſt, but with many of the rich productions of the Eaſtern parts of India.

On his return to Liſbon, he was received with the admiration and gratitude due to a man who, by his ſuperior abilities and reſolution, had conducted to ſuch an happy iſſue an undertaking of the greateſt importance, which had long occupied the thoughts of his Sovereign, and excited the hopes of his fellow-ſubjects[f],

[f] Aſia de João de Barros, dec. i. lib. iv. c. 11. Caſtagneda, Hiſt. de l'Inde trad. en François, liv. i. c. 2—28.

Nor

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Nor did this event interest the Portuguese alone. No nation in Europe beheld it with unconcern. For although the discovery of a new world, whether we view it as a display of genius in the person who first conceived an idea of that undertaking which led mankind to the knowledge of it, whether we contemplate its influence upon science by giving a more complete knowledge of the globe which we inhabit, or whether we consider its effects upon the commercial intercourse of mankind, be an event far more splendid than the voyage of Gama, yet the latter seems originally to have excited more general attention. The former, indeed, filled the minds of men with astonishment; it was some time, however, before they attained such a sufficient knowledge of that portion of the earth now laid open to their view, as to form any just idea, or even probable conjecture, with respect to what might be the consequences of communication with it. But the immense value of the Indian trade, which both in ancient and in modern times had enriched every nation by which it was carried on, was a subject familiar to the thoughts of all intelligent men, and they at once perceived that the discovery of this new route of navigation to the East, must occasion great revolutions, not only in the course of commerce, but in the political state of Europe. SECT. III.

What

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WHAT theſe revolutions were moſt likely to be, and how they would operate, were points examined with particular attention in the cities of Liſbon and of Venice, but with feelings very different. The Portugueſe, founding upon the rights to which, in that age, priority of diſcovery, confirmed by a papal grant, were ſuppoſed to confer, deemed themſelves entitled to an excluſive commerce with the countries which they had firſt viſited, began to enjoy, by anticipation, all the benefits of it, and to fancy that their capital would ſoon be what Venice then was, the great ſtore-houſe of Eaſtern commodities to all Europe, and the ſeat of opulence and power. On the firſt intelligence of Gama's ſucceſsful voyage, the Venetians, with the quick-ſighted diſcernment of merchants, foreſaw the immediate conſequence of it to be the ruin of that lucrative branch of commerce which had contributed ſo greatly to enrich and aggrandize their country; and they obſerved this with more poignant concern, as they were apprehenſive that they did not poſſeſs any effectual means of preventing, or even retarding, its operation.

THE hopes and fears of both were well founded. The Portugueſe entered upon the new career opened to them with activity and ardour, and made exertions, both commercial and military, far beyond what could have been expected

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expected from a kingdom of such inconsiderable extent. All these were directed by an intelligent monarch, capable of forming plans of the greatest magnitude with calm systematic wisdom, and of prosecuting them with unremitting perseverance. The prudence and vigour of his measures, however, would have availed little without proper instruments to carry them into execution. Happily for Portugal, the discerning eye of Emanuel selected a succession of officers to take the supreme command in India, who, by their enterprising valour, military skill, and political sagacity, accompanied with disinterested integrity, public spirit, and love of their country, have a title to be ranked with the persons most eminent for virtue and abilities in any age or nation. Greater things perhaps were atchieved by them, than were ever accomplished in so short a time. Before the close of Emanuel's reign, twenty-four years only after the voyage of Gama, the Portuguese had rendered themselves masters of the city of Malacca, in which the great staple of trade carried on among the inhabitants of all those regions in Asia, which Europeans have distinguished by the general name of the East-Indies, was then established. To this port, situated nearly at an equal distance from the Eastern and Western extremities of these countries, and possessing the command

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of that ſtrait, by which they keep communication with each other, the merchants of China, of Japan, of every kingdom on the continent, of the Moluccas and all the iſlands in the Archipelago, reſorted from the Eaſt; and thoſe of Malabar, of Ceylon, of Coromandel, and of Bengal, from the Weſt[g]. This conqueſt ſecured to the Portugueſe great influence over the interior commerce of India, while, at the ſame time, by their ſettlements at Goa and Diu, they were enabled to engroſs the trade of the Malabar coaſt, and to obſtruct greatly the long eſtabliſhed intercourſe of Egypt with India by the Red Sea. Their ſhips frequented every port in the Eaſt where valuable commodities were to be found, from the Cape of Good Hope to the river of Canton; and along this immenſe ſtretch of coaſt, extending upwards of four thouſand leagues[h], they had eſtabliſhed, for the conveniency or protection of trade, a chain of forts or factories. They had likewiſe taken poſſeſſion of ſtations moſt favourable to commerce along the Southern coaſt of Africa, and in many of the iſlands which lie between Madagaſcar and the Moluccas. In every part

[g] Decad. de Barros, dec. i. liv. viii. c. 1. Oſor. de reb. Eman. lib. vii. 213, &c.

[h] Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, tom. i. p. 140.

of

of the East they were received with respect, in many they had acquired the absolute command. They carried on trade there without rival or controul; they prescribed to the natives the terms of their mutual intercourse; they often set what price they pleased on goods which they purchased; and were thus enabled to import from Indostan and the regions beyond it, whatever is useful, rare, or agreeable, in greater abundance, and of more various kinds, than had been known formerly in Europe. SECT. III.

Not satisfied with this ascendant which they had acquired in India, the Portuguese early formed a scheme, no less bold than interested, of excluding all other nations from participating of the advantages of commerce with the East. In order to affect this, it was necessary to obtain possession of such stations in the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, as might render them masters of the navigation of these two inland seas, and enable them both to obstruct the ancient commercial intercourse between Egypt and India, and to command the entrance of the great rivers, which facilitated the conveyance of Indian goods, not only through the interior provinces of Asia, but as far as Constantinople. The conduct of the measures for this purpose was committed to Alphonso Albuquerque, the most

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eminent of all the Portugueſe generals who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in India. After the utmoſt efforts of genius and valour, he was able to accompliſh one-half only of what the ambition of his countrymen had planned. By wreſting the iſland of Ormuz, which commanded the mouth of the Perſian Gulf, from the petty princes, who, as tributaries to the monarchs of Perſia, had eſtabliſhed their dominion there, he ſecured to Portugal that extenſive trade with the Eaſt, which the Perſians had carried on for ſeveral centuries. In the hands of the Portugueſe, Ormuz ſoon became the great mart from which the Perſian empire, and all the provinces of Aſia to the weſt of it, were ſupplied with the productions of India; and a city which they built on that barren iſland, deſtitute of water, was rendered one of the chief ſeats of opulence, ſplendour, and luxury in the Eaſtern world[i].

THE operations of Albuquerque in the Red Sea were far from being attended with equal ſucceſs. Partly by the vigorous reſiſtance of the Arabian princes, whoſe ports he attacked, and partly by the damage his fleet ſuſtained in a ſea of

[i] Oſorius de reb. geſtis Eman. lib. x. p. 274, &c. Tavernier's Travels, book v. c. 23. Kœmpfer Amœnit. Exot. p. 756, &c.

which

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which the navigation is remarkably difficult and dangerous, he was conſtrained to retire, without effecting any ſettlement of importance [k]. The ancient channel of intercourſe with India by the Red Sea ſtill continued open to the Egyptians; but their commercial tranſactions in that country were greatly circumſcribed and obſtructed, by the influence which the Portugueſe had acquired in every port to which they were accuſtomed to reſort. SECT. III.

In conſequence of this, the Venetians ſoon began to feel that decreaſe of their own Indian trade which they had foreſeen and dreaded. In order to prevent the farther progreſs of this evil, they perſuaded the Soldan of the Mameluks, equally alarmed with themſelves at the rapid ſucceſs of the Portugueſe in the Eaſt, and no leſs intereſted to hinder them from engroſſing that commerce, which had ſo long been the chief ſource of opulence both to the monarchs and to the people of Egypt, to enter into a negociation with the Pope and the King of Portugal. The tone which the Soldan aſſumed in this negociation was ſuch as became the fierce chief of a military government. After ſtating his excluſive right to the trade

[k] Oſorius. lib. ix. p. 248, &c.

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with India, he forewarned Julius II. and Emanuel, that if the Portugueſe did not relinquiſh that new courſe of navigation by which they had penetrated into the Indian ocean, and ceaſe from encroaching on that commerce, which from time immemorial had been carried on between the Eaſt of Aſia and his dominions, he would put to death all the Chriſtians in Egypt, Syria, and Paleſtine, burn their churches, and demoliſh the holy ſepulchre itſelf[1]. This formidable threat, which, during ſeveral centuries, would have made all Chriſtendom tremble, ſeems to have made ſo little impreſſion, that the Venetians, as the laſt expedient, had recourſe to a meaſure, which, in that age, was deemed not only reprehenſible but impious. They incited the Soldan to fit out a fleet in the Red Sea, and to attack thoſe unexpected invaders of a gainful monopoly, of which he and his predeceſſors had long enjoyed undiſturbed poſſeſſion. As Egypt did not produce timber proper for building ſhips of force, the Venetians permitted the Soldan to cut it in their foreſts of Dalmatia, whence it was conveyed to Alexandria, and then carried, partly by water and partly by land, to Suez. There

[1] Oſorius de rebus Eman. lib. iv. p. 110. edit. 1580. Aſia de Barros, decad. i. lib. viii. c. 2.

twelve

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twelve ships of war were built, on board of which a body of Mameluks was ordered to serve, under the command of an officer of merit. These new enemies, far more formidable than the natives of India with whom the Portuguese had hitherto contended, they encountered, with undaunted courage, and after some conflicts, they entirely ruined the squadron, and remained masters of the Indian ocean [m].

Soon after this disaster, the dominion of the Mameluks was overturned, and Egypt, Syria, and Palestine were subjected to the Turkish empire by the victorious arms of Selim I. Their mutual interest quickly induced the Turks and Venetians to forget ancient animosities, and to co-operate towards the ruin of the Portuguese trade in India. With this view Selim confirmed to the Venetians the extensive commercial privileges which they had enjoyed under the government of the Mameluks, and published an edict permitting the free entry of all the productions of the East, imported directly from Alexandria, into every part of his dominions, and imposing heavy duties upon such as were brought from Lisbon [n].

[m] Asia de Barros, dec. ii. lib. ii. c. 6. Lafitau, Hist. de Decouvertes des Portugais, i. 292, &c. Osor. lib. iv. p. 120.

[n] Sandi Stor. Civ. Venez. part ii. 901. part iii. 432.

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But all these were unavailing efforts against the superior advantages which the Portuguese possessed in supplying Europe with the commodities of the East, in consequence of having opened a new mode of communication with it. At the same time, the Venetians, brought to the brink of ruin by the fatal league of Cambray, which broke the power and humbled the pride of the republic, were incapable of such efforts for the preservation of their commerce, as they might have made in the more vigorous age of their government, and were reduced to the feeble expedients of a declining state. Of this there is a remarkable instance in an offer made by them to the King of Portugal in the year one thousand five hundred and twenty-one, to purchase, at a stipulated price, all the spices imported into Lisbon, over and above what might be requisite for the consumption of his own subjects. If Emanuel had been so inconsiderate as to close with this proposal, Venice would have recovered all the benefit of the gainful monopoly which she had lost. But the offer met with the reception that it merited, and was rejected without hesitation *.

The Portuguese, almost without obstruction, continued their progress in the East, until

* Osor. de reb. Eman. lib. xii. 265.

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they eſtabliſhed there a commercial empire; to which, whether we conſider its extent, its opulence, the ſlender power by which it was formed, or the ſplendour with which the government of it was conducted, there had hitherto been nothing comparable in the hiſtory of nations. Emanuel, who laid the foundation of this ſtupendous fabric, had the ſatisfaction to ſee it almoſt completed. Every part of Europe was ſupplied by the Portugueſe with the productions of the Eaſt; and if we except ſome inconſiderable quantity of them, which the Venetians ſtill continued to receive by the ancient channels of conveyance, our quarter of the globe had no longer any commercial intercourſe with India, and the regions of Aſia beyond it, but by the Cape of Good Hope. SECT. III.

THOUGH from this period the people of Europe have continued to carry on their trade with India by ſea, yet a conſiderable portion of the valuable productions of the Eaſt is ſtill conveyed to other regions of the earth by land-carriage. In tracing the progreſs of trade with India, this branch of it is an object of conſiderable magnitude, which has not been examined with ſufficient attention. That the ancients ſhould have had recourſe frequently to the tedious and expenſive mode of tranſporting

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goods by land, will not appear ſurpriſing, when we recollect the imperfect ſtate of navigation among them: The reaſon of this mode of conveyance being not only continued, but increaſed, in modern times, demands ſome explanation.

If we inſpect a map of Aſia, we cannot fail to obſerve, that the communication throughout all the countries of that great continent to the weſt of Indoſtan and China, though opened in ſome degree towards the ſouth by the navigable rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, and towards the north by two inland ſeas, the Euxine and Caſpian, muſt be carried on in many extenſive provinces wholly by land. This, as I have obſerved, was the firſt mode of intercourſe between different countries, and during the infancy of navigation it was the only one. Even after that art had attained ſome degree of improvement, the conveyance of goods by the two rivers formerly mentioned, extended ſo little way into the interior country, and the trade of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas were ſo often obſtructed by the barbarous nations ſcattered along their ſhores, that partly on that account, and partly from the adherence of mankind to ancient habits, the commerce of the various provinces of Aſia, particularly that with India

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India and the regions beyond it, continued to be conducted by land. SECT. III.

THE ſame circumſtances which induced the inhabitants of Aſia to carry on ſuch a conſiderable part of their commerce with each other in this manner, operated with ſtill more powerful effect in Africa. That vaſt continent, which little reſembles the other diviſions of the earth, is not penetrated with inland ſeas, like Europe and Aſia, or by a chain of lakes, like North America, or opened by rivers (the Nile alone excepted) of extended navigation. It forms one uniform, continuous ſurface, between the various parts of which there could be no intercourſe from the earlieſt times, but by land. Rude as all the people of Africa are, and ſlender as the progreſs is which they have made in the arts of life, ſuch a communication appears to have been early opened and always kept up. How far it extended in the more early periods to which my reſearches have been directed, and by what different routes it was carried on, I have not ſufficient information to determine with accuracy. It is highly probable that, from time immemorial, the gold, the ivory, the perfumes, both of the ſouthern parts of Africa, and of its more northern diſtricts, were conveyed either to the Arabian Gulf, or to Egypt, and

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and exchanged for the ſpices and other productions of the Eaſt.

THE Mahomedan religion, which ſpread with amazing rapidity over all Aſia and a conſiderable part of Africa, contributed greatly towards the increaſe of commercial intercourſe by land in both theſe quarters of the globe, and has given it additional vigour, by mingling with it a new principle of activity, and by directing it to a common centre. Mahomet enjoined all his followers to viſit once in their life-time, the Caaba, or ſquare building in the temple of Mecca, the immemorial object of veneration among his countrymen, not only on account of its having been choſen (according to their tradition) to be the reſidence of man at his creation [p], but becauſe it was the firſt ſpot on this earth which was conſecrated to the worſhip of God [q]. In order to preſerve continually upon their minds a ſenſe of obligation to perform this duty, he directed that, in all the multiplied acts of devotion which his religion preſcribes, true believers ſhould always turn their faces towards

[p] Abul-Ghazi Bayadur Khan, Hiſt. Geneal. des Tatars. p. 15.

[q] Ohſſon Tableau General de l'Empire Othoman, tom. iii. p. 150, &c. 289. edit. 8vo.

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that holy place[r]. In obedience to a precept solemnly enjoined and ſedulouſly inculcated, large caravans of pilgrims aſſemble annually in every country where the Mahomedan faith is eſtabliſhed. From the ſhores of the Atlantic on one hand, and from the moſt remote regions of the Eaſt on the other, the votaries of the Prophet advance to Mecca. Commercial ideas and objects mingle with thoſe of devotion. The numerous camels[s] of each caravan are loaded with thoſe commodities of every country which are of eaſieſt carriage and moſt ready ſale. The holy city is crowded, not only with zealous devotees, but with opulent merchants. During the few days they remain there, the fair of Mecca is the greateſt, perhaps, on the face of the earth. Mercantile tranſactions are carried on in it to an immenſe value, of which the diſpatch, the ſilence, the mutual confidence and good faith in conducting them, are the moſt unequivocal proof. The productions and manufactures of India form a capital article in this great traffic, and the caravans, on their return, diſſeminate them through every part of Aſia and Africa. Some of theſe are deemed neceſſary, not only to the comfort,

[r] Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Caaba* & *Keblah*.

[s] See NOTE LIII.

but

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but to the preſervation of life, and others contribute to its elegance and pleaſure. They are ſo various as to ſuit the taſte of mankind in every climate, and in different ſtages of improvement; and are in high requeſt among the rude natives of Africa, as well as the more luxurious inhabitants of Aſia. In order to ſupply their ſeveral demands, the caravans return loaded with the muſlins and chintzes of Bengal and the Deccan, the ſhawls of Cachemire, the pepper of Malabar, the diamonds of Golconda, the pearls of Kilkare, the cinnamon of Ceylon, the nutmeg, cloves, and mace of the Moluccas, and an immenſe number of other Indian commodities.

Beside theſe great caravans, formed partly by reſpect for a religious precept, and partly with a view to extend a lucrative branch of commerce, there are other caravans, and theſe not inconſiderable, compoſed entirely of merchants, who have no object but trade. Theſe, at ſtated ſeaſons, ſet out from different parts of the Turkiſh and Perſian dominions, and proceeding to Indoſtan, and even to China, by routes which were anciently known, they convey by land-carriage the moſt valuable commodities of theſe countries to the remote provinces of both empires. It is only by conſidering the

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the distance to which large quantities of these commodities are carried, and frequently across extensive deserts, which, without the aid of camels, would have been impassable, that we can form any idea of the magnitude of the trade with India by land, and are led to perceive, that in a Disquisition concerning the various modes of conducting this commerce, it is well entitled to the attention which I have bestowed in endeavouring to trace it [t].

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[t] See NOTE LIV.

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION IV.

General Obſervations.

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THUS I have endeavoured to deſcribe the progreſs of trade with India, both by ſea and by land, from the earlieſt times in which hiſtory affords any authentic information concerning it, until an entire revolution was made in its nature, and the mode of carrying it on, by that great diſcovery which I originally fixed as the utmoſt boundary of my enquiries. Here, then, this Diſquiſition might have been terminated. But as I have conducted my readers to that period when a new order of ideas, and new arrangements of policy began to be introduced

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duced into Europe, in consequence of the value and importance of commerce being so thoroughly understood, that in almost every country the encouragement of it became a chief object of public attention; as we have now reached that point whence a line may be drawn which marks the chief distinction between the manners and political institutions of ancient and modern times, it will render the work more instructive and useful, to conclude it with some general observations, which naturally arise from a survey of both, and a comparison of the one with the other. These observations, I trust, will be found not only to have an intimate connection with the subject of my researches, and to throw additional light upon it; but will serve to illustrate many particulars in the general history of commerce, and to point out effects or consequences of various events, which have not been generally observed, or considered with that attention which they merited.

I. After viewing the great and extensive effects of finding a new course of navigation to India by the Cape of Good Hope, it may appear surprising to a modern observer, that a discovery of such importance was not made, or even attempted, by any of the commercial states of the ancient world. But in judging with

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reſpect to the conduct of nations in remote times, we never err more widely, than when we decide with regard to it, not according to the ideas and views of their age, but of our own. This is not, perhaps, more conſpicuous in any inſtance, than in that under conſideration. It was by the Tyrians, and by the Greeks, who were maſters of Egypt, that the different people of Europe were firſt ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt. From the account that has been given of the manner in which they procured theſe, it is manifeſt that they had neither the ſame inducements with modern nations, to wiſh for any new communication with India, nor the ſame means of accompliſhing it. All the commercial tranſactions of the ancients with the Eaſt were confined to the ports on the Malabar coaſt, or extended at fartheſt to the iſland of Ceylon. To theſe ſtaples, the natives of all the different regions in the eaſtern parts of Aſia brought the commodities which were the growth of their ſeveral countries, or the product of their ingenuity, in their own veſſels, and with them the ſhips from Tyre and from Egypt completed their inveſtments. While the operations of their Indian trade were carried on within a ſphere ſo circumſcribed, the conveyance of a cargo by the Arabian Gulf, notwithſtanding the expence of land carriage, either

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from Elath to Rhinocolura, or across the desart to the Nile, was so safe and commodious, that the merchants of Tyre and Alexandria had little reason to be solicitous for the discovery of any other. The situation of both these cities, as well as that of the other considerable commercial states of antiquity, was very different from that of the countries to which, in later times, mankind have been indebted for keeping up intercourse with the remote parts of the globe. Portugal, Spain, England, Holland, which have been most active and successful in this line of enterprise, all lie on the Atlantic ocean, (in which every European voyage of discovery must commence,) or have immediate access to it. But Tyre was situated at the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean, Alexandria not far from it; Rhodes, Athens, Corinth, which came afterwards to be ranked among the most active trading cities of antiquity, lay considerably advanced towards the same quarter in that sea. The commerce of all these states was long confined within the precincts of the Mediterranean; and in some of them, never extended beyond it. The pillars of Hercules, or the Straits of Gibraltar, were long considered as the utmost boundary of navigation. To reach this was deemed a signal proof of naval skill; and before any of

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these states could give a beginning to an attempt towards exploring the vast unknown ocean which lay beyond it, they had to accomplish a voyage (according to their ideas) of great extent and much danger. This was sufficient to deter them from engaging in an arduous undertaking, from which, even if attended with success, their situation prevented their entertaining hopes of deriving great advantage.

But could we suppose the discovery of a new passage to India to have become an object of desire or pursuit to any of these states, their science as well as practice of navigation was so defective, that it would have been hardly possible for them to attain it. The vessels which the ancients employed in trade were so small, as not to afford stowage for provisions sufficient to subsist a crew during a long voyage. Their construction was such that they could seldom venture to depart far from land; and their mode of steering along the coast (which I have been obliged to mention often) so circuitous and slow, that from these as well as from other circumstances which I might have specified[b], we may pronounce

[a] See NOTE LV.

[b] Goguet Orig. des Loix des Arts, &c. ii. 303. 329.

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nounce a voyage from the Mediterranean to India by the Cape of Good Hope, to have been an undertaking beyond their power to accomplish, in such a manner as to render it, in any degree, subservient to commerce. To this decision, the account preserved by Herodotus, of a voyage performed by some Phenician ships employed by a king of Egypt, which taking their departure from the Arabian Gulf, doubled the southern promontory of Africa, and arrived at the end of three years, by the straits of Cadez, or Gibraltar, at the mouth of the Nile[c], can hardly be considered as repugnant; for several writers of the greatest eminence among the ancients, and most distinguished for their proficiency in the knowledge of geography, regarded this account rather as an amusing tale, than the history of a real transaction; and either entertained doubts concerning the possibility of sailing round Africa, or absolutely denied it[d]. But if what Herodotus relates concerning the course held by these Phenician ships had ever been received by the ancients with general assent, we can hardly suppose that any state could have been so wildly adventurous

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[c] Lib. iv. c. 42.

[d] Polyb. lib. iii. p. 193. edit. Casaub. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 6. Ptol. Geogr. lib. iv. c. 9. See NOTE LVI.

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II. THE rapid progress of the moderns in exploring India, as well as the extensive power and valuable settlements which they early acquired there, mark such a distinction between their mode of conducting naval operations, and that of the ancients, as merits to be considered and explained with attention. From the reign of the first Ptolemy, to the conquest of Egypt by the Mahometans, Europe had been supplied with the productions of the East by the Greeks of Alexandria, by the Romans while they were masters of Egypt, and by the subjects of the Emperors of Constantinople, when that kingdom became a province of their dominions. During this long period, extending almost to a thousand years, none of those people, the most enlightened undoubtedly in the ancient world, ever advanced by sea farther towards the East than the Gulf of Siam, and had no regular established trade but with the ports on the coast of Malabar, or those in the island of Ceylon. They attempted no conquests in any part of India, they made no settlements, they erected no forts. Satisfied with an intercourse merely commercial, they did not aim at acquiring

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acquiring any degree of power or dominion in the countries where they traded, though it seems to be probable that they might have eſtabliſhed it without much oppoſition from the natives, a gentle effeminate people, with whom, at that time, no foreign and more warlike race was mingled. But the enterpriſing activity of the Portugueſe was not long confined within the ſame limits; a few years after their arrival at Calecut, they advanced towards the Eaſt, into regions unknown to the ancients. The kingdoms of Cambodia, Cochin China, Tonquin, the vaſt empire of China, and all the fertile iſlands in the great Indian Archipelago, from Sumatra to the Philippines, were diſcovered, and the Portugueſe, though oppoſed in every quarter by the Mahomedans of Tartar or Arabian origin ſettled in many parts of India, enemies much more formidable than the natives, eſtabliſhed there that extenſive influence and dominion which I have formerly deſcribed.

Of this remarkable difference between the progreſs and operations of the ancients and moderns in India, the imperfect knowledge of the former, with reſpect both to the theory and practice of navigation, ſeems to have been the principal cauſe. From the coaſt of Malabar to the Philippines, was a voyage of an extent

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far beyond any that the ancients were accustomed to undertake, and, according to their manner of sailing, must have required a great length of time to perform it. The nature of their trade with India was such, that they had not (as has been formerly observed) the same inducements with the moderns, to prosecute discovery with ardour; and, according to the description given of the vessels in which the merchants of Alexandria carried on their trade from the Arabian Gulf, they appear to have been very unfit for that purpose. On all these accounts, the ancients remained satisfied with a slender knowledge of India; and influenced by reasons proceeding from the same cause, they attempted neither conquest nor settlement there. In order to accomplish either of these, they must have transported a considerable number of men into India. But, from the defective structure of their ships, as well as from the imperfection of their art in navigating them, the ancients seldom ventured to convey a body of troops to any distance by sea. From Berenice to Musiris was to them, even after Hippalus had discovered the method of steering a direct course, and when their naval skill had attained to its highest state of improvement, a voyage of no less than seventy days. By the ancient route along the coast of Persia, a voyage

a voyage from the Arabian Gulf to any part of India must have been of greater length, and accomplished more slowly. As no hostile attack was ever made upon India by sea, either by the Greek monarchs of Egypt, though the two first of them were able and ambitious Princes, or by the most enterprizing of the Roman Emperors, it is evident that they must have deemed it an attempt beyond their power to execute. Alexander the Great, and, in imitation of him, his successors, the monarchs of Syria, were the only persons in the ancient world who formed an idea of establishing their dominion in any part of India; but it was with armies led thither by land, that they hoped to atchieve this. SECT. IV.

III. The sudden effect of opening a direct communication with the East, in lowering the price of Indian commodities, is a circumstance that merits observation. How compendious soever the ancient intercourse with India may appear to have been, it was attended with considerable expence. The productions of the remote parts of Asia, brought to Ceylon, or to the ports on the Malabar coast, by the natives, were put on board the ships which arrived from the Arabian Gulf. At Berenice they were landed, and carried by camels two hundred

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and fifty eight miles to the banks of the Nile. There they were again embarked, and conveyed down the river to Alexandria, whence they were dispatched to different markets. The addition to the price of goods by such a multiplicity of operations must have been considerable, especially when the rate chargeable on each operation was fixed by monopolists, subject to no controul. But, after the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, its various commodities were purchased at first hand in the countries of which they were the growth or manufacture. In all these, particularly in Indostan and in China, the subsistence of man is more abundant than in any other part of the earth. The people live chiefly upon rice, the most prolific of all grains. Population, of consequence, is so great, and labour so extremely cheap, that every production of nature or of art is sold at a very low price. When these were shipped in different parts of India, they were conveyed directly to Lisbon, by a navigation, long indeed, but uninterrupted and safe, and thence circulated through Europe. The carriage of mercantile goods by water is so much less expensive than by any other mode of conveyance, that as soon as the Portuguese could import the productions of India in sufficient quantities to supply the demands of Europe,

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Europe, they were able to afford them at such a reduced price, that the competition of the Venetians ceased almoſt entirely, and the full ſtream of commerce flowed in its natural direction towards the cheapeſt market. In what proportion the Portugueſe lowered the price of Indian commodities, I cannot aſcertain with preciſion, as I have not found in contemporary writers ſufficient information with reſpect to that point. Some idea, however, of this, approaching perhaps near to accuracy, may be formed, from the computations of Mr. Munn, an intelligent Engliſh merchant. He has publiſhed a table of the prices paid for various articles of goods in India, compared with the prices for which they were ſold in Aleppo, from which the difference appears to be nearly as three to one; and he calculates, that, after a reaſonable allowance for the expence of the voyage from India, the ſame goods may be ſold in England at half the price which they bear in Aleppo. The expence of conveying the productions of India up the Perſian Gulf to Baſſora, and thence either through the Great or Little Deſert to Aleppo, could not, I ſhould imagine, differ conſiderably from that by the Red Sea to Alexandria. We may therefore ſuppoſe, that the Venetians might purchaſe them from the merchants

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merchants of that city, at nearly the same rate for which they were sold in Aleppo; and when we add to this, what they must have charged as their own profit in all the markets which they frequented, it is evident that the Portuguese might afford to reduce the commodities of the East at a price below that which has been mentioned, and might supply every part of Europe with them more than one-half cheaper than formerly. The enterprizing schemes of the Portuguese monarchs were accomplished sooner, as well as more completely, than in the hour of most sanguine hope they could have presumed to expect; and early in the sixteenth century, their subjects became possessed of a monopoly of the trade with India, founded upon the only equitable title, that of furnishing its productions in greater abundance, and at a more moderate price.

IV. We may observe, that in consequence of a more plentiful supply of Indian goods, and at a cheaper rate, the demand for them increased rapidly in every part of Europe. To trace the progress of this in detail, would lead me far beyond the period which I have fixed as the limit of this Disquisition, but some general remarks concerning it will be found intimately connected with the subject of my inquiries.

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The chief articles of importation from India, while the Romans had the direction of the trade with that country, have been formerly specified. But upon the subversion of their empire, and the settlement of the fierce warriors of Scythia and Germany in the various countries of Europe, the state of society, as well as the condition of individuals, became so extremely different, that the wants and desires of men were no longer the same. Barbarians, many of them not far advanced in their progress beyond the rudest state of social life, had little relish for those accommodations, and that elegance, which are so alluring to polished nations. The curious manufactures of silk, the precious stones and pearls of the East, which had been the ornament and pride of the wealthy and luxurious citizens of Rome, were not objects of desire to men, who, for a considerable time after they took possession of their new conquests, retained the original simplicity of their pastoral manners. They advanced, however, from rudeness to refinement in the usual course of progression which nations are destined to hold, and an increase of wants and desires requiring new objects to gratify them, they began to acquire a relish for some of the luxuries of India. Among these they had a singular predilection for the spiceries and aromatics which that country yields in such variety

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variety and abundance. Whence their peculiar fondness for these arose, it is not of importance to inquire. Whoever consults the writers of the middle ages, will find many particulars which confirm this observation. In every enumeration of Indian commodities which they give, spices are always mentioned as the most considerable and precious article[e]. In their cookery, all dishes were highly seasoned with them. In every entertainment of parade, a profusion of them was deemed essential to magnificence. In every medical prescription they were principal ingredients[f]. But considerable as the demand for spices had become, the mode in which the nations of Europe had hitherto been supplied with them was extremely disadvantageous. The ships employed by the merchants of Alexandria never ventured to visit those remote regions which produce the most valuable spices, and before they could be circulated through Europe, they were loaded with the accumulated profits received by four or five different hands through which they had passed. But the Portuguese, with a bolder spirit of navigation, having penetrated into every part of Asia, took in their

[e] Jac. de Vitriac. Hist. Hieros. ap. Bongars, i. p. 1099. Wilh. Tyr. lib. xii. c. 23.

[f] Du Cange, Glossar. Verb. *Aromata, Species.* Henry's Hist. of G. Brit. vol. iv. p. 597, 598.

cargo

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cargo of spices in the places where they grew, and could afford to dispose of them at such a price, that, from being an expensive luxury, they became an article of such general use, as greatly augmented the demand for them. An effect similar to this may be observed, with respect to the demand for other commodities imported from India, upon the reduction of their price by the Portuguese. From that period a growing taste for Asiatic luxuries may be traced in every country of Europe, and the number of ships fitted out for that trade at Lisbon continued to increase every year [s].

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V. Lucrative as the trade with India was, and had long been deemed, it is remarkable that the Portuguese were suffered to remain in the undisturbed and exclusive possession of it, during the course of almost a century. In the ancient world, though Alexandria, from the peculiar felicity of its situation, could carry on an intercourse with the East by sea, and circulate its productions through Europe with such advantage, as gave it a decided superiority over every rival; yet various attempts (which have been described in their proper places) were made, from time to time, to obtain some share in a commerce so apparently beneficial. From the

[s] See NOTE LVII.

growing

SECT. IV. growing activity of the commercial ſpirit in the ſixteenth century, as well as from the example of the eager ſolicitude with which the Venetians and Genoeſe exerted themſelves alternately to ſhut out each other from any ſhare in the Indian trade, it might have been expected that ſome competitor would have ariſen to call in queſtion the claim of the Portugueſe to an excluſive right of traffic with the Eaſt, and to wreſt from them ſome portion of it. There were, however, at that time ſome peculiar circumſtances in the political ſtate of all thoſe nations in Europe, whoſe intruſion, as rivals, the Portugueſe had any reaſon to dread, which ſecured to them the quiet enjoyment of their monopoly of Indian commerce, during ſuch a long period. From the acceſſion of Charles V. to the throne, Spain was either ſo much occupied in a multiplicity of operations in which it was engaged by the ambition of that monarch, and of his ſon Philip II. or ſo intent on proſecuting its own diſcoveries and conqueſts in the New World, that although, A. D. 1521. by the ſucceſsful enterprize of Magellan, its fleets were unexpectedly conducted by a new courſe to that remote region of Aſia which was the ſeat of the moſt gainful and alluring branch of trade carried on by the Portugueſe, it could make no conſiderable effort to avail itſelf of the commercial advantages which it might have

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derived from that event. By the acquisition of the crown of Portugal, in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty, the kings of Spain, instead of the rivals, became the protectors of the Portuguese trade, and the guardians of all its exclusive rights. Throughout the sixteenth century, the strength and resources of France were so much wasted by the fruitless expeditions of their monarchs into Italy, by their unequal contest with the power and policy of Charles V. and by the calamities of the civil wars which desolated the kingdom upwards of forty years, that it could neither bestow much attention upon objects of commerce, nor engage in any scheme of distant enterprize. The Venetians, how sensibly soever they might feel the mortifying reverse of being excluded, almost entirely, from the Indian trade, of which their capital had been formerly the chief seat, were so debilitated and humbled by the League of Cambray, that they were no longer capable of engaging in any undertaking of magnitude. England, weakened (as was formerly observed) by the long contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, and just beginning to recover its proper vigour, was restrained from active exertion, during one part of the sixteenth century, by the cautious maxims of Henry VII. and wasted in strength during another part of it, by engaging inconsiderately

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sidefately in the wars between the princes on the continent. The nation, though destined to acquire territories in India more extensive and valuable than were ever possessed by any European power, had no such presentiment of its future eminence there, as to take an early part in the commerce or transactions of that country, and a great part of the century elapsed before it began to turn its attention towards the East.

While the most considerable nations in Europe found it necessary, from the circumstances which I have mentioned, to remain inactive spectators of what passed in the East, the Seven United Provinces of the Low Countries, recently formed into a small state, still struggling for political existence, and yet in the infancy of its power, ventured to appear in the Indian ocean as the rivals of the Portuguese; and, despising their pretensions to an exclusive right of commerce with the extensive countries to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, invaded that monopoly which they had hitherto guarded with such jealous attention. The English soon followed the example of the Dutch, and both nations, at first by the enterprizing industry of private adventurers, and afterwards by the more powerful efforts of trading companies, under the protection of public autho-

tity, advanced with aſtoniſhing ardour and ſucceſs in this new career opened to them. The vaſt fabric of power which the Portugueſe had erected in the Eaſt (a ſuperſtructure much too large for the baſis on which it had to reſt) was almoſt entirely overturned, in as ſhort time, and with as much facility, as it had been raiſed. England and Holland, by driving them from their moſt valuable ſettlements, and ſeizing the moſt lucrative branches of their trade, have attained to that pre-eminence in naval power and commercial opulence, by which they are diſtinguiſhed among the nations of Europe.

VI. The coincidence, in point of time, of the diſcoveries made by Columbus in the Weſt, and thoſe of Gama in the Eaſt, is a ſingular circumſtance, which merits obſervation, on account of the remarkable influence of thoſe events in forming or ſtrengthening the commercial connection of the different quarters of the globe with each other. In all ages, gold and ſilver, particularly the latter, have been the commodities exported with the greateſt profit to India. In no part of the earth do the natives depend ſo little upon foreign countries, either for the neceſſaries or luxuries of life. The bleſſings of a favourable climate and fertile ſoil, augmented by their own ingenuity, afford them

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whatever they desire. In consequence of this, trade with them has always been carried on in one uniform manner, and the precious metals have been given in exchange for their peculiar productions, whether of nature or art. But when the communication with India was rendered so much more easy, that the demand for its commodities began to increase far beyond what had been formerly known, if Europe had not been supplied with the gold and silver which it was necessary to carry to the markets of the East from sources richer and more abundant than her own barren and impoverished mines, she must either have abandoned the trade with India altogether, or have continued it with manifest disadvantage. By such a continual drain of gold and silver, as well as by the unavoidable waste of both in circulation and in manufactures, the quantity of those metals must have gone on diminishing, and their value would have been so much enhanced, that they could not have continued long to be of the same utility in the commercial transactions between the two countries. But before the effects of this diminution could be very sensibly felt, America opened her mines, and poured in treasures upon Europe in the most copious stream to which mankind ever had access. This treasure, in spite of innumerable anxious precautions to prevent

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prevent it, flowed to the markets where the commodities neceſſary for ſupplying the wants, or gratifying the luxury of the Spaniards, were to be found; and from that time to the preſent, the Engliſh and Dutch have purchaſed the productions of China and Indoſtan, with ſilver brought from the mines of Mexico and Peru. The immenſe exportation of ſilver to the Eaſt, during the courſe of two centuries, has not only been replaced by the continual influx from America, but the quantity of it has been conſiderably augmented, and at the ſame time the proportional rate of its value in Europe and in India has varied ſo little, that it is chiefly with ſilver that many of the capital articles imported from the Eaſt are ſtill purchaſed. SECT. IV.

While America contributed in this manner to facilitate and extend the intercourſe of Europe with Aſia, it gave riſe to a traffic with Africa, which, from ſlender beginnings, has become ſo conſiderable, as to form the chief bond of commercial connection with that continent. Soon after the Portugueſe had extended their diſcoveries on the coaſt of Africa beyond the river Senegal, they endeavoured to derive ſome benefit from their new ſettlements there, by the ſale of ſlaves. Various circumſtances combined in favouring the revival of this odious traffic.

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SECT. IV. In every part of America, of which the Spaniards took poſſeſſion, they found that the natives, from the feebleneſs of their frame, from their indolence, or from the injudicious manner of treating them, were incapable of the exertions requiſite either for working mines, or for cultivating the earth. Eager to find hands more induſtrious and efficient, the Spaniards had recourſe to their neighbours the Portugueſe, and purchaſed from them negroe ſlaves. Experience ſoon diſcovered that they were men of a more hardy race, and ſo much better fitted for enduring fatigue, that the labour of one negroe was computed to be equal to that of four Americans [h]; and from that time the number employed in the New World has gone on increaſing with rapid progreſs. In this practice, no leſs repugnant to the feelings of humanity than to the principles of religion, the Spaniards have unhappily been imitated by all the nations of Europe, who have acquired territories in the warmer climates of the New World. At preſent the number of negroe ſlaves in the ſettlements of Great Britain and France in the Weſt Indies, exceeds a million; and as the eſtabliſhment of ſervitude has been found, both in ancient and in modern times, extremely unfavour-

[h] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 328.

able

able to population, it requires an annual importation from Africa, of at leaſt fifty-eight thouſand to keep up the ſtock[1]. If it were poſſible to aſcertain, with equal exactneſs, the number of ſlaves in the Spaniſh dominions, and in North America, the total number of negroe ſlaves might be well reckoned at as many more.

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THUS the commercial genius of Europe, which has given it a viſible aſcendant over the three other diviſions of the earth, by diſcerning their reſpective wants and reſources, and by rendering them reciprocally ſubſervient to one another, has eſtabliſhed an union among them, from which it has derived an immenſe increaſe of opulence, of power, and of enjoyments.

VII. THOUGH the diſcovery of a New World in the Weſt, and the opening of a more eaſy and direct communication with the remote regions of the Eaſt co-operated towards extending the commerce, and adding to the enjoyments, of Europe, a remarkable difference may be obſerved, with reſpect both to the time and the manner in which they produced theſe effects. When the Portugueſe firſt viſited the different countries of Aſia, ſtretching from

[1] Report of Lords of the Privy Council, A. D. 1788.

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the coaſt of Malabar to China, they found them poſſeſſed by nations highly civilized, which had made conſiderable progreſs in elegant as well as uſeful arts, which were accuſtomed to intercourſe with ſtrangers, and well acquainted with all the advantages of commerce. But when the Spaniards began to explore the New World which they diſcovered, the aſpect which it preſented to them was very different. The iſlands were inhabited by naked ſavages, ſo unacquainted with the ſimpleſt and moſt neceſſary arts of life, that they ſubſiſted chiefly on the ſpontaneous productions of a fertile ſoil and genial climate. The continent appeared to be a foreſt of immenſe extent, along the coaſt of which were ſcattered ſome feeble tribes, not greatly ſuperior to the iſlanders in induſtry or improvement. Even its two large monarchies, which have been dignified with the appellation of civilized ſtates, had not advanced ſo far beyond their countrymen, as to be entitled to that name. The inhabitants, both of Mexico and Peru, unacquainted with the uſeful metals, and deſtitute of the addreſs requiſite for acquiring ſuch command of the inferior animals as to derive any conſiderable aid from their labour, had made ſo little progreſs in agriculture, the firſt of all arts, that one of the greateſt difficulties with which the ſmall number of

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of Spaniards, who overturned thoſe highly extolled empires, had to ſtruggle, was how to procure in them what was ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence. SECT. IV.

It was of conſequence, with a very different ſpirit, that the intercourſe with two countries, reſembling each other ſo little in their degree of improvement, was begun and carried on. The Portugueſe, certain of finding in the Eaſt, not only the productions with which the bountiful hand of Nature has enriched that part of the globe, but various manufactures which had long been known and admired in Europe, engaged in this alluring trade with the greateſt eagerneſs. The encouragement of it their monarchs conſidered as a chief object of government, towards which they directed all the power of the kingdom, and rouzed their ſubjects to ſuch vigorous exertions in the proſecution of it, as occaſioned that aſtoniſhing rapidity of progreſs which I have deſcribed. The ſanguine hopes with which the Spaniards entered upon their career of diſcovery, met not with the ſame ſpeedy gratification. From the induſtry of the rude inhabitants of the New World, they did not receive a ſingle article of commerce. Even the natural productions of the ſoil and climate, when not cheriſhed and multiplied by

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the fostering and active hand of man, were of little account. Hope, rather than success, incited them to persist in extending their researches and conquests; and as government derived little immediate benefit from these, it left the prosecution of them chiefly to private adventurers, by whose enterprising activity, more than by any effort of the state, the most valuable possessions of Spain in America were acquired. Instead of the instantaneous and great advantages which the Portuguese derived from their discoveries above half a century elapsed before the Spaniards reaped any benefit of consequence from their conquests, except the small quantities of gold which the islanders were compelled to collect, and the plunder of the gold and silver employed by the Mexicans and Peruvians as ornaments of their persons and temples, or as utensils of sacred or domestic use. It was not until the discovery of the mines of Potosi in Peru, in the year one thousand five hundred and forty-five, and of those of Sacotecas in Mexico, soon after, that the Spanish territories in the New World brought a permanent and valuable addition of wealth and revenue to the mother country.

NOR did the trade with India differ more from that with America, in respect of the particular

ticular circumſtance which I have explained, than in reſpect to the manner of carrying it on, after it grew to be a conſiderable object of political attention. Trade with the Eaſt was a ſimple mercantile tranſaction, confined to the purchaſe either of the natural productions of the country, ſuch as ſpices, precious ſtones, pearls, &c. or of the manufactures which abounded among an induſtrious race of men, ſuch as ſilk and cotton ſtuffs, porcelane, &c. Nothing more was requiſite in conducting this trade, than to ſettle a few ſkilful agents in proper places, to prepare a proper aſſortment of goods for completing the cargoes of ſhips as ſoon as they arrived from Europe, or at the utmoſt to acquire the command of a few fortified ſtations, which might ſecure them admiſſion into ports where they might careen in ſafety, and find protection from the inſults of any hoſtile power. There was no neceſſity of making any attempt to eſtabliſh colonies, either for the cultivation of the ſoil, or the conduct of manufactures. Both theſe remained, as formerly, in the hands of the natives. SECT. IV.

But as ſoon as that wild ſpirit of enterprize, which animated the Spaniards who firſt explored and ſubdued the New World, began to ſubſide, and when, inſtead of roving as adventurers

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from province to province in queſt of gold and ſilver, they ſeriouſly turned their thoughts towards rendering their conqueſts beneficial by cultivation and induſtry, they found it neceſſary to eſtabliſh colonies in every country which they wiſhed to improve. Other nations imitated their example in the ſettlements which they afterwards made in ſome of the iſlands, and on the continent of North America. Europe, after having deſolated the New World, began to repeople it, and under a ſyſtem of colonization (the ſpirit and regulations of which it is not the object of this Diſquiſition to explain) the European race has multiplied there amazingly. Every article of commerce imported from the New World, if we except the furs and ſkins purchaſed from the independent tribes of hunters in North America, and from a few tribes in a ſimilar ſtate on the Southern continent, is the produce of the induſtry of Europeans ſettled there. To their exertions, or to thoſe of hands which they have taught or compelled to labour, we are indebted for ſugar, rum, cotton, tobacco, indigo, rice, and even the gold and ſilver extracted from the bowels of the earth. Intent on thoſe lucrative branches of induſtry, the inhabitants of the New World pay little attention to thoſe kinds of labour which occupy a conſiderable part of the members of other ſocieties, and

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and depend, in some measure, for their subsistence, and entirely for every article of elegance and luxury, upon the ancient continent. Thus the Europeans have become manufacturers for America, and their industry has been greatly augmented by the vast demands for supplying the wants of extensive countries, the population of which is continually increasing. Nor is the influence of this demand confined solely to the nations which have a more immediate connection with the American colonies; it is felt in every part of Europe that furnishes any article exported to them, and gives activity and vigour to the hand of the artisan in the inland provinces of Germany, as well as to those in Great Britain and other countries, which carry on a direct trade with the New World.

But while the discovery and conquest of America is allowed to be one principal cause of that rapid increase of industry and wealth, which is conspicuous in Europe during the two last centuries, some timid theorists have maintained, that throughout the same period Europe has been gradually impoverished, by being drained of its treasure, in order to carry on its trade with India. But this apprehension has arisen from inattention to the nature and use of the precious metals. They are to be

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be considered in two different lights; either as the signs which all civilized nations have agreed to employ, in order to estimate or represent the value both of labour and of all commodities, and thus to facilitate the purchase of the former, and the conveyance of the latter from one proprietor to another; or gold and silver may be viewed as being themselves commodities or articles of commerce, for which some equivalent must be given by such as wish to acquire them. In this light, the exportation of the precious metals to the East should be regarded; for, as the nation by which they are exported must purchase them with the produce of its own labour and ingenuity, this trade must contribute, though not in the same obvious and direct manner as that with America, towards augmenting the general industry and opulence of Europe. If England, as the price of Mexican and Peruvian dollars which are necessary for carrying on its trade with India, must give a certain quantity of its woollen or cotton cloth or hard-ware, then the hands of an additional number of manufacturers are rendered active, and work to a certain amount must be executed, for which, without this trade, there would not have been any demand. The nation reaps all the benefit arising from a new creation of industry. With the

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the gold and silver which her manufactures have purchased in the West, she is enabled to trade in the markets of the East, and the exportation of treasure to India, which has been so much dreaded, instead of impoverishing, enriches the kingdom. SECT. IV.

VIII. It is to the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and to the vigour and success with which the Portuguese prosecuted their conquests and established their dominion there, that Europe has been indebted for its preservation from the most illiberal and humiliating servitude that ever oppressed polished nations. For this observation I am indebted to an Author, whose ingenuity has illustrated, and whose eloquence has adorned the History of the Settlements and commerce of Modern Nations in the East and West Indies[1]; and it appears to me so well founded as to merit more ample investigation. A few years after the first appearance of the Portuguese in India, the dominion of the Mamelukes was overturned by the irresistible power of the Turkish arms, and Egypt and Syria were annexed as provinces to the Ottoman empire. If after this event the commercial intercourse with India had con-

[1] M. L'Abbé Rayna!.

tinued

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tinued to be carried on in its ancient channels, the Turkiſh Sultans, by being maſters of Egypt and Syria, muſt have poſſeſſed the abſolute command of it, whether the productions of the Eaſt were conveyed by the Red Sea to Alexandria, or were tranſported by land-carriage from the Perſian Gulf to Conſtantinople, and the ports of the Mediterranean. The monarchs who were then at the head of this great empire, were neither deſtitute of abilities to perceive the pre-eminence to which this would have elevated them, nor of ambition to aſpire to it. Selim, the conqueror of the Mameluks, by confirming the ancient privileges of the Venetians in Egypt and Syria, and by his regulations concerning the duties on Indian goods, which I have already mentioned, early diſcovered his ſolicitude to ſecure all the advantages of commerce with the Eaſt to his own dominions. The attention of Solyman the Magnificent, his ſucceſſor, ſeems to have been equally directed towards the ſame object. More enlightened than any monarch of the Ottoman race, he attended to all the tranſactions of the European ſtates, and had obſerved the power as well as opulence to which the republic of Venice had attained by engroſſing the commerce with the Eaſt. He now beheld Portugal riſing towards the ſame elevation, by the ſame means

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means. Eager to imitate and to ſupplant them, he formed a ſcheme ſuitable to his character for political wiſdom and the appellation of *Inſtitutor of Rules*, by which the Turkiſh Hiſtorians have diſtinguiſhed him, and eſtabliſhed, early in his reign, a ſyſtem of commercial laws in his dominions, by which he hoped to render Conſtantinople the great ſtaple of Indian trade, as it had been in the proſperous ages of the Greek empire[k]. For accompliſhing this ſcheme, however, he did not rely on the operation of laws alone; he fitted out about the ſame time a formidable fleet in the Red Sea, under the conduct of a confidential officer, with ſuch a body of janizaries on board of it, as he deemed ſufficient not only to drive the Portugueſe out of all their new ſettlements in India, but to take poſſeſſion of ſome commodious ſtation in that country, and to erect his ſtandard there. The Portugueſe, by efforts of valour and conſtancy, entitled to the ſplendid ſucceſs with which they were crowned, repulſed this powerful armament in every enterprize it undertook, and compelled the ſhattered remains of the Turkiſh fleet and

SECT. IV.

A.D. 1538.

[k] Paruta Hiſt. Venet. lib. vii. p. 589. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part ii. p. 901.

army

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SECT. IV.

army to return with ignominy to the harbours from which they had taken their departure, with the moſt ſanguine hopes of terminating the expedition in a very different manner[1]. Solyman, though he never relinquiſhed the deſign of expelling the Portugueſe from India, and of acquiring ſome eſtabliſhment there, was ſo occupied during the remainder of his reign, by the multiplicity of arduous operations in which an inſatiable ambition involved him, that he never had leiſure to reſume the proſecution of it with vigour.

If either the meaſures of Selim had produced the effect which he expected, or if the more adventurous and extenſive plan of Solyman had been carried into execution, the command of the wealth of India, together with ſuch a marine as the monopoly of trade with that country has, in every age, enabled the power which poſſeſſed it to create and maintain, muſt have brought an acceſſion of force to an empire already formidable to mankind, that would have rendered it altogether irreſiſtible. Europe, at that period, was not in a condition to have defended itſelf againſt the combined ex-

[1] Aſia de Barros, dec. iv. lib. x. c. 1, &c.

ertions

SECT. IV.

ertions of ſuch naval and military power, ſupported by commercial wealth, and under the direction of a monarch whoſe comprehenſive genius was able to derive from each its peculiar advantages, and to employ all with the greateſt effect. Happily for the human race, the deſpotic ſyſtem of Turkiſh government, founded on ſuch illiberal fanaticiſm as has extinguiſhed ſcience in Egypt, in Aſſyria, and in Greece, its three favourite manſions in ancient times, was prevented from extending its dominion over Europe, and from ſuppreſſing liberty, learning, and taſte, when beginning to make ſucceſsful efforts to revive there, and again to bleſs, to enlighten, and to poliſh mankind.

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APPENDIX.

I SHALL now endeavour to fulfil an engagement which I came under [a], to make ſome obſervations upon the genius, the manners, and inſtitutions of the people of India, as far as they can be traced from the earlieſt ages to which our knowledge of them extends. Were I to enter upon this wide field with an intention of ſurveying its whole extent; were I to view each object which it preſents to a philoſophical inquirer, under all its different aſpects, it would lead me into reſearches and ſpeculations, not only of immenſe length, but altogether foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition. My inquiries and reflections ſhall therefore be confined to what is intimately connected with the

[a] See page 27.

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design of this work. I shall collect the facts which the ancients have transmitted to us concerning the institutions peculiar to the natives of India, and, by comparing them with what we now know of that country, endeavour to deduce such conclusions as tend to point out the circumstances which have induced the rest of mankind, in every age, to carry on commercial intercourse to so great an extent with that country.

Of this intercourse there are conspicuous proofs in the earliest periods concerning which history affords information. Not only the people contiguous to India, but remote nations, seem to have been acquainted, from time immemorial, with its commodities, and to have valued them so highly, that in order to procure them they undertook fatiguing, expensive, and dangerous journeys. Whenever men give a decided preference to the commodities of any particular country, this must be owing either to its possessing some valuable natural productions peculiar to its soil and climate, or to some superior progress which its inhabitants have made in industry, art, and elegance. It is not to any peculiar excellence in the natural productions of India, that we must ascribe entirely the predilection of ancient nations for its commodities;

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ties; for, pepper excepted, an article, it muſt be allowed, of great importance, they are little different from thoſe of other tropical countries; and Ethiopia or Arabia might have fully ſupplied the Phenicians, and other trading people of antiquity, with the ſpices, the perfumes, the precious ſtones, the gold and ſilver, which formed the principal articles of their commerce.

WHOEVER then wiſhes to trace the commerce with India to its ſource, muſt ſearch for it, not ſo much in any peculiarity of the natural productions of that country, as in the ſuperior improvement of its inhabitants. Many facts have been tranſmitted to us, which, if they are examined with proper attention, clearly demonſtrate, that the natives of India were not only more early civilized, but had made greater progreſs in civilization than any other people. Theſe I ſhall endeavour to enumerate, and to place them in ſuch a point of view as may ſerve both to throw light upon the inſtitutions, manners, and arts of the Indians, and to account for the eagerneſs of all nations to obtain the productions of their ingenious induſtry.

BY the ancient Heathen writers, the Indians were reckoned among thoſe races of men which

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they denominated *Autochthones* or *Aborigines*, whom they conſidered as natives of the ſoil, whoſe origin could not be traced [b]. By the inſpired writers, the wiſdom of the Eaſt (an expreſſion which is to be underſtood as a deſcription of their extraordinary progreſs in ſcience and arts) was early celebrated [c]. In order to illuſtrate and confirm theſe explicit teſtimonies concerning the ancient and high civilization of the inhabitants of India, I ſhall take a view of their rank and condition as individuals; of their civil policy; of their laws and judicial proceedings; of their uſeful and elegant arts; of their ſciences; and of their religious inſtitutions; as far as information can be gathered from the accounts of the Greek and Roman writers, compared with what ſtill remains of their ancient acquirements and inſtitutions.

I. FROM the moſt ancient accounts of India we learn, that the diſtinction of ranks and ſeparation of profeſſions were completely eſtabliſhed there. This is one of the moſt undoubted proofs of a ſociety conſiderably advanced in its progreſs. Arts in the early ſtages of ſocial life are ſo few, and ſo ſimple, that each man is ſufficiently maſter of them all, to gratify every

[b] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 151. [c] 1 Kings, iv. 31.

demand

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demand of his own limited deſires. A ſavage can form his bow, point his arrows, rear his hut, and hollow his canoe, without calling in the aid of any hand more ſkilful than his own [d]. But when time has augmented the wants of men, the productions of art become ſo complicated in their ſtructure, or ſo curious in their fabric, that a particular courſe of education is requiſite towards forming the artiſt to ingenuity in contrivance and expertneſs in execution. In proportion as refinement ſpreads, the diſtinction of profeſſions increaſes, and they branch out into more numerous and minute ſubdiviſions. Prior to the records of authentic hiſtory, and even before the moſt remote æra to which their own traditions pretend to reach, this ſeparation of profeſſions had not only taken place among the natives of India, but the perpetuity of it was ſecured by an inſtitution which muſt be conſidered as the fundamental article in the ſyſtem of their policy. The whole body of the people was divided into four orders or caſts. The members of the firſt, deemed the moſt ſacred, had it for their province, to ſtudy the principles of religion; to perform its functions; and to cultivate the ſciences. They were the prieſts, the inſtructors, and philoſophers of the

[d] Hiſt. of Amer. vol. iii. 165.

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nation. The members of the second order were entrusted with the government and defence of the state. In peace they were its rulers and magistrates, in war they were the generals who commanded its armies and the soldiers who fought its battles. The third was composed of husbandmen and merchants; and the fourth of artisans, labourers, and servants. None of these can ever quit his own cast, or be admitted into another[e]. The station of every individual is unalterably fixed; his destiny is irrevocable; and the walk of life is marked out, from which he must never deviate. This line of separation is not only established by civil authority, but confirmed and sanctioned by religion; and each order or cast is said to have proceeded from the Divinity in such a different manner, that to mingle and confound them would be deemed an act of most daring impiety[f]. Nor is it between the four different tribes alone that such insuperable barriers are fixed; the members of each cast adhere invariably to the profession of their forefathers. From generation to generation, the same families have followed,

[e] Ayeen Akbery, iii. 81, &c. Sketches relating to the History, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 107, &c.

[f] See NOTE LVIII.

and

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and will always continue to follow, one uniform line of life.

SUCH arbitrary arrangements of the various members which compose a community, seem, at first view, to be adverse to improvement either in science or in arts; and by forming around the different orders of men artificial barriers, which it would be impious to pass, tend to circumscribe the operations of the human mind within a narrower sphere than nature has allotted to them. When every man is at full liberty to direct his efforts towards those objects and that end which the impulse of his own mind prompts him to prefer, he may be expected to attain that high degree of eminence to which the uncontrolled exertions of genius and industry naturally conduct. The regulations of Indian policy, with respect to the different orders of men, must necessarily, at some times, check genius in its career, and confine to the functions of an inferior cast, talents fitted to shine in an higher sphere. But the arrangements of civil government are made, not for what is extraordinary, but for what is common; not for the few, but for the many. The object of the first Indian legislators was to employ the most effectual means of providing for the subsistence, the security, and happiness of all the members of

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of the community over which they preſided. With this view they ſet apart certain races of men for each of the various profeſſions and arts neceſſary in a well-ordered ſociety, and appointed the exerciſe of them to be tranſmitted from father to ſon in ſucceſſion. This ſyſtem, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different ſtate of ſociety, have formed, will be found, upon attentive inſpection, better adapted to attain the end in view, than a careleſs obſerver, at firſt ſight, is apt to imagine. The human mind bends to the law of neceſſity, and is accuſtomed, not only to accommodate itſelf to the reſtraints which the condition of its nature, or the inſtitutions of its country, impoſe, but to acquieſce in them. From his entrance into life, an Indian knows the ſtation allotted to him, and the functions to which he is deſtined by his birth. The objects which relate to theſe, are the firſt that preſent themſelves to his view. They occupy his thoughts, or employ his hands; and, from his earlieſt years, he is trained to the habit of doing with eaſe and pleaſure, that which he muſt continue through life to do. To this may be aſcribed that high degree of perfection conſpicuous in many of the Indian manufactures; and though veneration for the practices of their anceſtors may check the ſpirit of invention,

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tion, yet, by adhering to theſe, they acquire ſuch an expertneſs and delicacy of hand, that Europeans, with all the advantages of ſuperior ſcience, and the aid of more complete inſtruments, have never been able to equal the exquiſite execution of their workmanſhip. While this high improvement of their more curious manufactures excited the admiration, and attracted the commerce of other nations, the ſeparation of profeſſions in India, and the early diſtribution of the people into claſſes, attached to particular kinds of labour, ſecured ſuch abundance of the more common and uſeful commodities, as not only ſupplied their own wants, but miniſtered to thoſe of the countries around them.

To this early diviſion of the people into caſts, we muſt likewiſe aſcribe a ſtriking peculiarity in the ſtate of India; the permanence of its inſtitutions, and the immutability in the manners of its inhabitants. What now is in India always was there, and is likely ſtill to continue: neither the ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticiſm of its Mahomedan conquerors, nor the power of its European maſters, have effected any conſiderable alteration [s]. The ſame diſtinctions of condition take place, the ſame

[s] See NOTE LIX.

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arrangements in civil and domeſtic ſociety remain, the ſame maxims of religion are held in veneration, and the ſame ſciences and arts are cultivated. Hence, in all ages, the trade with India has been the ſame; gold and ſilver have uniformly been carried thither in order to purchaſe the ſame commodities with which it now ſupplies all nations; and from the age of Pliny to the preſent times, it has been always conſidered and execrated as a gulf which ſwallows up the wealth of every other country, that flows inceſſantly towards it, and from which it never returns [h]. According to the accounts which I have given of the cargoes anciently imported from India, they appear to have conſiſted of nearly the ſame articles with thoſe of the inveſtments in our own times; and whatever difference we may obſerve in them ſeems to have ariſen, not ſo much from any diverſity in the nature of the commodities which the Indians prepared for ſale, as from a variety in the taſtes or in the wants of the nations which demanded them.

II. ANOTHER proof of the early and high civilization of the people of India, may be deduced from conſidering their political con-

[h] See NOTE LX.

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ſtitution and form of government. The Indians trace back the hiſtory of their own country through an immenſe ſucceſſion of ages, and aſſert, that all Aſia, from the mouth of the Indus on the weſt, to the confines of China on the eaſt, and from the mountains of Thibet on the north, to Cape Comorin on the ſouth, formed a vaſt empire, ſubject to one mighty ſovereign, under whom ruled ſeveral hereditary Princes and Rajahs. But their chronology, which meaſures the life of man in ancient times by thouſands of years, and computes the length of the ſeveral periods, during which it ſuppoſes the world to have exiſted, by millions, is ſo wildly extravagant, as not to merit any ſerious diſcuſſion. We muſt reſt ſatisfied, then, until ſome more certain information is obtained with reſpect to the ancient hiſtory of India, with taking the firſt accounts of that country, which can be deemed authentic, from the Greeks, who ſerved under Alexander the Great. They found kingdoms of conſiderable magnitude eſtabliſhed in that country. The territories of Porus and of Taxiles comprehended a great part of the Panjab, one of the moſt fertile and beſt cultivated countries in India. The kingdom of the Praſij, or Gandaridæ, ſtretched to a great extent on both ſides of the Ganges. All the three, as appears from the ancient Greek writers, were powerful and populous.

THIS

THIS deſcription of the partition of India into ſtates of ſuch magnitude, is alone a convincing proof of its having advanced far in civilization. In whatever region of the earth there has been an opportunity of obſerving the progreſs of men in ſocial life, they appear at firſt in ſmall independent tribes or communities. Their common wants prompt them to unite; and their mutual jealouſies, as well as the neceſſity of ſecuring ſubſiſtence, compel them to drive to a diſtance every rival who might encroach on thoſe domains which they conſider as their own. Many ages elapſe before they coaleſce, or acquire ſufficient foreſight to provide for the wants, or ſufficient wiſdom to conduct the affairs of a numerous ſociety. Even under the genial climate, and in the rich ſoil of India, more favourable perhaps to the union and increaſe of the human ſpecies than any other part of the globe, the formation of ſuch extenſive ſtates, as were eſtabliſhed in that country when firſt viſited by Europeans, muſt have been a work of long time; and the members of them muſt have been long accuſtomed to exertions of uſeful induſtry.

THOUGH monarchical government was eſtabliſhed in all the countries of India to which the knowledge of the ancients extended, the ſovereigns were far from poſſeſſing uncontrolled or deſpotic

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deſpotic power. No trace, indeed, is diſcovered there of any aſſembly or public body, the members of which, either in their own right, or as repreſentatives of their fellow-citizens, could interpoſe in enacting laws, or in ſuperintending the execution of them. Inſtitutions deſtined to aſſert and guard the rights belonging to men in a ſocial ſtate, how familiar ſoever the idea may be to the people of Europe, never formed a part of the political conſtitution in any great Aſiatic kingdom. It was to different principles that the natives of India were indebted for reſtrictions which limited the exerciſe of regal power. The rank of individuals was unalterably fixed, and the privileges of the different caſts were deemed inviolable. The monarchs of India, who are all taken from the ſecond of the four claſſes formerly deſcribed, which is intruſted with the functions of government and exerciſe of war, behold among their ſubjects an order of men far ſuperior to themſelves in dignity, and ſo conſcious of their own pre-eminence, both in rank and in ſanctity, that they would deem it degradation and pollution, if they were to eat of the ſame food with their ſovereign[k]. Their perſons are ſacred, and even for the moſt heinous crimes they cannot be capitally

[k] Orme's Diſſert. vol. i. p. 4. Sketches, &c. p. 113.

puniſhed;

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punished; their blood must never be shed [l]. To men in this exalted station monarchs must look up with respect, and reverence them as the ministers of religion, and the teachers of wisdom. On important occasions, it is the duty of sovereigns to consult them, and to be directed by their advice. Their admonitions, and even their censures, must be received with submissive respect. This right of the Brahmins to offer their opinion with respect to the administration of public affairs was not unknown to the ancients [m]; and in some accounts preserved in India of the events which happened in their own country, princes are mentioned, who, having violated the privileges of the casts, and disregarded the remonstrances of the Brahmins, were deposed by their authority, and put to death [n].

While the sacred rights of the Brahmins opposed a barrier against the encroachments of regal power on the one hand, it was circumscribed on the other by the ideas which those who occupied the highest stations in society entertained of their own dignity and privileges.

[l] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 10. p. 275. 283, &c.

[m] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C.

[n] Account of the Qualities requisite in a Magistrate, prefixed by the Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cii. and cxvi.

As

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As none but the members of the caſt next in rank to that which religion has rendered ſacred, could be employed in any function of the ſtate, the ſovereigns of the extenſive kingdoms anciently eſtabliſhed in India, found it neceſſary to entruſt them with the ſuperintendence of the cities and provinces too remote to be under their own immediate inſpection. In theſe ſtations they often acquired ſuch wealth and influence, that offices conferred during pleaſure, continued hereditarily in their families, and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the ſovereign and his ſubjects; and, by the vigilant jealouſy with which they maintained their own dignity and privileges, they conſtrained their rulers to reſpect them, and to govern with moderation and equity.

Nor were the benefits of theſe reſtraints upon the power of the ſovereign confined wholly to the two ſuperior orders in the ſtate; they extended, in ſome degree, to the third claſs employed in agriculture. The labours of that numerous and uſeful body of men are ſo eſſential to the preſervation and happineſs of ſociety, that the greateſt attention was paid to render their condition ſecure and comfortable. According to the ideas which prevailed among the natives of India (as we are informed by the

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first Europeans who visited their country), the sovereign is considered as the sole universal proprietor of all the land in his dominions, and from him is derived every species of tenure by which his subjects can hold it. These lands were let out to the farmers who cultivated them, at a stipulated rent, amounting usually to a fourth part of their annual produce paid in kind *. In a country where the price of work is extremely low, and where the labour of cultivation is very inconsiderable, the earth yielding its productions almost spontaneously, where subsistence is amazingly cheap, where few clothes are needed, and houses are built and furnished at little expence, this rate cannot be deemed exorbitant or oppressive. As long as the husbandman continued to pay the established rent, he retained possession of the farm, which descended, like property, from father to son.

These accounts given by ancient authors of the condition and tenure of the renters of land in India, agree so perfectly with what now takes place, that it may be considered almost as a description of the present state of its cultivation. In every part of India, where the native Hindoo Princes retain dominion, the *Ryots*, the modern

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 53.

name

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name by which the renters of land are diſtinguiſhed, hold their poſſeſſions by a leaſe, which may be conſidered as perpetual, and at a rate fixed by ancient ſurveys and valuations. This arrangement has been ſo long eſtabliſhed, and accords ſo well with the ideas of the natives, concerning the diſtinctions of caſts, and the functions allotted to each, that it has been inviolably maintained in all the provinces ſubject either to Mahomedans or Europeans; and, to both, it ſerves as the baſis on which their whole ſyſtem of finance is founded [p]. In a more remote period, before the original inſtitutions of India were ſubverted by foreign invaders, the induſtry of the huſbandman, on which every member of the community depended for ſubſiſtence, was as ſecure as the tenure by which he held his lands was equitable. Even war did not interrupt his labours or endanger his property. It was not uncommon, we are informed, that while two hoſtile armies were fighting a battle in one field, the peaſants were ploughing or reaping in the next field in perfect tranquillity [q]. Theſe maxims and regulations of the ancient legiſlators of India have a near reſemblance to the ſyſtem of thoſe ingenious ſpeculators on political œconomy in modern times, who re-

[p] See NOTE LXI. [q] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1030. A.

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preſent the produce of land as the ſole ſource of wealth in every country; and who conſider the diſcovery of this principle, according to which they contend that the government of nations ſhould be conducted, as one of the greateſt efforts of human wiſdom. Under a form of government, which paid ſuch attention to all the different orders of which the ſociety is compoſed, particularly the cultivators of the earth, it is not wonderful that the ancients ſhould deſcribe the Indians as a moſt happy race of men; and that the moſt intelligent modern obſervers ſhould celebrate the equity, the humanity, and mildneſs of Indian policy. A Hindoo Rajah, as I have been informed by perſons well acquainted with the ſtate of India, reſembles more a father preſiding in a numerous family of his own children, than a ſovereign ruling over inferiors, ſubject to his dominion. He endeavours to ſecure their happineſs with vigilant ſolicitude; they are attached to him with the moſt tender affection and inviolable fidelity. We can hardly conceive men to be placed in any ſtate more favourable to their acquiring all the advantages derived from ſocial union. It is only when the mind is perfectly at eaſe, and neither feels nor dreads oppreſſion, that it employs its active powers in forming numerous arrangements of police, for ſecuring its enjoyments

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ments and increaſing them. Many arrangements of this nature the Greeks, though accuſtomed to their own inſtitutions, the moſt perfect at that time in Europe, obſerved and admired among the Indians, and mention them as inſtances of high civilization and improvement. There were eſtabliſhed among the Indians three diſtinct claſſes of officers, one of which had it in charge to inſpect agriculture, and every kind of country work. They meaſured the portions of land allotted to each renter. They had the cuſtody of the *Tanks*, or public reſervoirs of water, without a regular diſtribution of which, the fields in a torrid climate cannot be rendered fertile, they marked out the courſe of the highways, along which, at certain diſtances, they erected ſtones, to meaſure the road and direct travellers[r]. To officers of a ſecond claſs was committed the inſpection of the police in cities; their functions, of courſe, were many and various; ſome of which only I ſhall ſpecify. They appropriated houſes for the reception of ſtrangers; they protected them from injury, provided for their ſubſiſtence, and, when ſeized with any diſeaſe, they appointed phyſicians to attend them; and, on the event of their death, they not only buried them with decency,

[r] See NOTE LXII.

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but took charge of their effects, and reſtored them to their relations. They kept exact regiſters of births and of deaths. They viſited the public markets, and examined weights and meaſures. The third claſs of officers ſuperintended the military department; but, as the objects to which their attention was directed are foreign from the ſubject of my inquiries, it is unneceſſary to enter into any detail with reſpect to them *.

As manners and cuſtoms in India deſcend almoſt without variation from age to age, many of the peculiar inſtitutions which I have enumerated ſtill ſubſiſt there. There is ſtill the ſame attention to the conſtruction and preſervation of tanks, and the diſtribution of their waters. The direction of roads, and placing ſtones along them, is ſtill an object of police. *Choultries*, or houſes built for the accommodation of travellers, are frequent in every part of the country, and are uſeful as well as noble monuments of Indian munificence and humanity. It is only among men in the moſt improved ſtate of ſociety, and under the beſt forms of government, that we diſcover inſtitutions ſimilar to

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1034. A. &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

thoſe

thoſe, which I have deſcribed; and many nations have advanced far in their progreſs, without eſtabliſhing arrangements of police equally perfect.

III. In eſtimating the progreſs which any nation has made in civilization, the object that merits the greateſt degree of attention, next to its political conſtitution, is the ſpirit of the laws and nature of the forms by which its judicial proceedings are regulated. In the early and rude ages of ſociety, the few diſputes with reſpect to property which ariſe, are terminated by the interpoſition of the old men, or by the authority of the chiefs in every ſmall tribe or community; their deciſions are dictated by their own diſcretion, or founded on plain and obvious maxims of equity. But as the controverſies multiply, caſes ſimilar to ſuch as have been formerly determined muſt recur, and the awards upon theſe grow gradually into precedents, which ſerve to regulate future judgments. Thus, long before the nature of property is defined by poſitive ſtatutes, or any rules preſcribed concerning the mode of acquiring or conveying it, there is gradually formed, in every ſtate, a body of cuſtomary or common law, by which judicial proceedings are directed, and every deciſion conformable to it is ſubmitted

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to with reverence, as the result of the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages.

In this state the administration of justice seems to have been in India when first visited by Europeans. Though the Indians, according to their account, had no written laws, but determined every controverted point, by recollecting what had been formerly decided [t]; they assert, that justice was dispensed among them with great accuracy, and that crimes were most severely punished [u]. But in this general observation is contained all the intelligence which the ancients furnish concerning the nature and forms of judicial proceedings in India. From the time of Megasthenes, no Greek or Roman of any note appears to have resided long enough in the country, or to have been so much acquainted with the customs of the natives, as to be capable of entering into any detail with respect to a point of so great importance in their policy. Fortunately, the defects of their information have been amply supplied by the more accurate and extensive researches of the moderns. During the course of almost three centuries, the number of persons who have resorted

[t] Strabo, lib. xv. 1035. D.
[u] Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

from

from Europe to India has been great. Many of them, who have remained long in the country, and were perſons of liberal education and enlarged minds, have lived in ſuch familiar intercourſe with the natives, and acquired ſo competent a knowledge of their languages, as enabled them to obſerve their inſtitutions with attention, and to deſcribe them with fidelity. Reſpectable as their authority may be, I ſhall not, in what I offer for illuſtrating the judicial proceedings of the Hindoos, reſt upon it alone, but ſhall derive my information from ſources higher and more pure.

TOWARDS the middle of the ſixteenth century, Akber the ſixth, in deſcent from Tamerlane, mounted the throne of Indoſtan. He is one of the few ſovereigns entitled to the appellation both of Great and Good, and the only one of Mahomedan race, whoſe mind appears to have riſen ſo far above all the illiberal prejudices of that fanatical religion in which he was educated, as to be capable of forming a plan worthy of a monarch who loved his people, and was ſolicitous to render them happy. As, in every province of his extenſive dominions, the Hindoos formed the great body of his ſubjects, he laboured to acquire a perfect knowledge of their religion, their ſciences, their laws, and inſtitutions;

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ſtitutions; in order that he might conduct every part of his government, particularly the adminiſtration of juſtice, in a manner as much accommodated as poſſible to their own ideas[x]. In this generous undertaking he was ſeconded with zeal by his vizier Abul Fazel, a miniſter whoſe underſtanding was not leſs enlightened than that of his maſter. By their aſſiduous reſearches, and conſultation of learned men[y], ſuch information was obtained as enabled Abul Fazel to publiſh a brief compendium of Hindoo juriſprudence in the Ayeen Akbery[z], which may be conſidered as the firſt genuine communication of its principles to perſons of a different religion. About two centuries afterwards, the illuſtrious example of Akber was imitated and ſurpaſſed by Mr. Haſtings, the Governor General of the Britiſh Settlements in India. By his authority, and under his inſpection, the moſt eminent Pundits, or Brahmins learned in the laws, of the provinces over which he preſided, were aſſembled at Calcutta; and, in the courſe of two years, compiled, from their moſt ancient and approved authors, ſentence by ſentence, without addition or diminution, a full code of Hindoo laws[a]; which is, undoubtedly,

A. D. 1773.

[x] See NOTE LXIII. [y] Ayeen Akbery, A. vol. iii. p. 95. [z] Vol. iii. p. 197, &c. [a] Preface to the Code, p. x.

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the moſt valuable and authentic elucidation of Indian policy and manners that has been hitherto communicated to Europe.

ACCORDING to the Pundits, ſome of the writers upon whoſe authority they found the decrees which they have inſerted in the Code, lived ſeveral millions of years before their time [b]; and they boaſt of having a ſucceſſion of expounders of their laws from that period to the preſent. Without entering into any examination of what is ſo extravagant, we may conclude, that the Hindoos have in their poſſeſſion treatiſes concerning the laws and juriſprudence of their country, of more remote antiquity than are to be found in any other nation. The truth of this depends not upon their own teſtimony alone, but it is put beyond doubt by one circumſtance, that all theſe treatiſes are written in the Sanſkreet language, which has not been ſpoken for many ages in any part of Indoſtan, and is now underſtood by none but the moſt learned Brahmins. That the Hindoos were a people highly civilized, at the time when their laws were compoſed, is moſt clearly eſtabliſhed by internal evidence contained in the Code itſelf. Among nations beginning to emerge from barbariſm,

[b] Preface to the Code, p. xxxviii.

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the regulations of law are extremely ſimple, and applicable only to a few obvious caſes of daily occurrence. Men muſt have been long united in a ſocial ſtate, their tranſactions muſt have been numerous and complex, and judges muſt have determined an immenſe variety of controverſies to which theſe give riſe, before the ſyſtem of law becomes ſo voluminous and comprehenſive as to direct the judicial proceedings of a nation far advanced in improvement. In that early age of the Roman republic, when the laws of the Twelve Tables were promulgated, nothing more was required than the laconic injunctions which they contain for regulating the deciſions of courts of juſtice; but, in a later period, the body of civil law, ample as its contents are, was found hardly ſufficient for that purpoſe. To the jejune brevity of the Twelve Tables, the Hindoo Code has no reſemblance, but with reſpect to the number and variety of points it conſiders, it will bear a compariſon with the celebrated Digeſt of Juſtinian; or with the ſyſtems of juriſprudence in nations moſt highly civilized. The articles of which the Hindoo Code is compoſed, are arranged in natural and luminous order. They are numerous and comprehenſive, and inveſtigated with that minute attention and diſcernment which are natural to a people diſtinguiſhed for acute-

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acuteneſs and ſubtility of underſtanding, who have been long accuſtomed to the accuracy of judicial proceedings, and acquainted with all the refinements of legal practice. The deciſions concerning every point (with a few exceptions occaſioned by local prejudices and peculiar cuſtoms) are founded upon the great and immutable principles of juſtice which the human mind acknowledges and reſpects, in every age, and in all parts of the earth. Whoever examines the whole work, cannot entertain a doubt of its containing the juriſprudence of an enlightened and commercial people. Whoever looks into any particular title, will be ſurpriſed with a minuteneſs of detail and nicety of diſtinction, which, in many inſtances, ſeem to go beyond the attention of European legiſlation; and it is remarkable that ſome of the regulations which indicate the greateſt degree of refinement, were eſtabliſhed in periods of the moſt remote antiquity. "In the firſt "of the ſacred law tracts, (as is obſerved by "a perſon to whom Oriental literature, in all "its branches, has been greatly indebted,) "which the Hindoos ſuppoſe to have been "revealed by Menu ſome millions of years "ago, there is a curious paſſage on the legal "intereſt of money, and the limited rate of it "in different caſes, with an exception in re-

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"gard to adventures at ſea; an exception "which the ſenſe of mankind approves, and "which commerce abſolutely requires, though "it was not before the reign of Charles I. "that our Engliſh juriſprudence fully admit-"ted it in reſpect of maritime contracts[c]." It is likewiſe worthy of notice, that though the natives of India have been diſtinguiſhed in every age for the humanity and mildneſs of their diſpoſition, yet ſuch is the ſolicitude of their law-givers to preſerve the order and tranquillity of ſociety, that the puniſhments which they inflict on criminals, are (agreeably to an obſervation of the ancients already mentioned) extremely rigorous. "Puniſhment (according "to a ſtriking perſonification in the Hindoo "code) is the magiſtrate; puniſhment is the "inſpirer of terror; puniſhment is the nouriſher "of the ſubjects; puniſhment is the defender "from calamity; puniſhment is the guardian "of thoſe that ſleep; puniſhment, with a "black aſpect, and a red eye, terrifies the "guilty[d]."

IV. As the condition of the ancient inhabitants of India, whether we conſider them as

[c] Sir William Jones's Third Diſcourſe, Aſiat. Reſearch. p. 428.

[d] Code, ch. xxi. § 8.

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individuals, or as members of ſociety, appears, from the preceding inveſtigation, to have been extremely favourable to the cultivation of uſeful and elegant arts; we are naturally led to inquire, whether the progreſs which they actually made in them, was ſuch as might have been expected from a people in that ſituation. In attempting to trace this progreſs, we have not the benefit of guidance equal to that which conducted our reſearches concerning the former articles of inquiry. The ancients, from their ſlender acquaintance with the interior ſtate of India, have been able to communicate little information with reſpect to the arts cultivated there; and though the moderns, during their continued intercourſe with India for three centuries, have had acceſs to obſerve them with greater attention, it is of late only, that by ſtudying the languages now and formerly ſpoken in India, and by conſulting and tranſlating their moſt eminent authors, they have begun to enter into that path of inquiry which leads with certainty to a thorough knowledge of the ſtate of arts cultivated in that country.

One of the firſt arts which human ingenuity aimed at improving, beyond what mere neceſſity requires, was that of building. In the brief re-

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marks which the ſubject of my inquiries leads me to make on the progreſs of this art in India, I ſhall confine my attention wholly to thoſe of higheſt antiquity. The moſt durable monuments of human induſtry are public buildings. The productions of art formed for the common purpoſes of life, waſte and periſh in uſing them; but works deſtined for the benefit of poſterity ſubſiſt through ages, and it is according to the manner in which theſe are executed, that we form a judgment with reſpect to the degree of power, ſkill, and improvement to which the people by whom they were erected had attained. In every part of India monuments of high antiquity are found. Theſe are of two kinds, ſuch as were conſecrated to the offices of religion, or fortreſſes built for the ſecurity of the country. In the former of theſe, to which Europeans, whatever their ſtructure may be, give the general name of *Pagodas*, we may obſerve a diverſity of ſtile, which both marks the gradual progreſs of architecture, and throws light on the general ſtate of arts and manners in different periods. The moſt early Pagodas appear to have been nothing more than excavations in mountainous parts of the country, formed probably in imitation of the natural caverns to which the firſt inhabitants

habitants of the earth retired for ſafety during the night, and where they found ſhelter from the inclemency of the ſeaſons. The moſt celebrated, and, as there is reaſon to believe, the moſt ancient of all theſe, is the Pagoda in the iſland Elephanta, at no great diſtance from Bombay. It has been hewn by the hands of man out of a ſolid rock, about half way up a high mountain, and formed into a ſpacious area, nearly 120 feet ſquare. In order to ſupport the roof, and the weight of the mountain that lies above it, a number of maſſy pillars, and of a form not inelegant, have been cut out of the ſame rock, at ſuch regular diſtances, as on the firſt entrance preſents to the eye of the ſpectator an appearance both of beauty and of ſtrength. Great part of the inſide is covered with human figures in high relief, of gigantic ſize as well as ſingular forms, and diſtinguiſhed by a variety of ſymbols, repreſenting, it is probable, the attributes of the deities whom they worſhipped, or the actions of the heroes whom they admired. In the iſle of Salſette, ſtill nearer to Bombay, are excavacations in a ſimilar ſtile, hardly inferior in magnificence, and deſtined for the ſame religious purpoſes.

THESE ſtupendous works are of ſuch high antiquity, that as the natives cannot, either from

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hiſtory or tradition, give any information concerning the time in which they were executed, they univerſally aſcribe the formation of them to the power of ſuperior beings. From the extent and grandeur of theſe ſubterraneous manſions, which intelligent travellers compare to the moſt celebrated monuments of human power and art in any part of the earth, it is manifeſt that they could not have been formed in that ſtage of ſocial life where men continue divided into ſmall tribes, unaccuſtomed to the efforts of perſevering induſtry. It is only in States of conſiderable extent, and among people long habituated to ſubordination, and to act with concert, that the idea of ſuch magnificent works is conceived, or the power of accompliſhing them can be found.

THAT ſome ſuch powerful ſtate was eſtabliſhed in India at the time when the excavations in the iſlands of Elephanta and Salſette were formed, is not the only concluſion to be drawn from a ſurvey of them; the ſtile in which the ſculptures with which they are adorned is executed, indicates a conſiderable improvement in art at that early period. Sculpture is the imitative art in which man ſeems to have made the firſt trial of his own talents. But even in thoſe countries where it has attained to the higheſt

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higheſt degree of perfection, its progreſs has been extremely ſlow. Whoever has attended to the hiſtory of this art in Greece, knows how far removed the firſt rude eſſay to repreſent the human form, was from any complete delineation of it*. But the different groupes of figures which ſtill remain entire in the Pagoda of Elephanta, however low they muſt rank if they be compared with the more elegant works of Grecian or even Etruſcan artiſts, are finiſhed in a ſtile conſiderably ſuperior to the hard, inexpreſſive manner of the Egyptians, or to the figures in the celebrated palace of Perſepolis. In this light they have appeared to perſons abundantly qualified to appretiate their merit, and from different drawings, particularly thoſe of Niebuhr, a traveller equally accurate in obſerving, and faithful in deſcribing, we muſt form a favourable opinion of the ſtate of arts in India at that period.

It is worthy of notice, that although ſeveral of the figures in the caverns at Elephanta be ſo different from thoſe now exhibited in the Pagodas as objects of veneration, that ſome learned Europeans have imagined they repre-

* Winkelman's Hiſt. de l'Art chez les Anciens, tom. i. p. 32, &c.

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ſent the rites of a religion more ancient than that now eſtabliſhed in Indoſtan, yet by the Hindoos themſelves the caverns are conſidered as hallowed places of their own worſhip, and they ſtill reſort thither to perform their devotions, and honour the figures there, in the ſame manner with thoſe in their own Pagodas. In confirmation of this, I have been informed by an intelligent obſerver, who viſited this ſubterraneous ſanctuary in the year 1782, that he was accompanied by a ſagacious Brahmin, a native of Benares, who, though he had never been in it before that time, recognized, at once, all the figures; was well acquainted with the parentage, education, and life of every deity or human perſonage there repreſented, and explained with fluency the meaning of the various ſymbols by which the images were diſtinguiſhed. This may be conſidered as a clear proof that the ſyſtem of mythology now prevalent in Benares, is not different from that delineated in the caverns of Elephanta. Mr. Hunter, who viſited Elephanta in the year 1784, ſeems to conſider the figures there as repreſenting deities who are ſtill objects of worſhip among the Hindoos [f]. One circumſtance ſerves to confirm the juſtneſs of this opinion. Several

[f] Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 286, &c.

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of the moſt conſpicuous perſonages in the groupes at Elephanta are decorated with the *Zennar*, the ſacred ſtring or cord peculiar to the order of Brahmins, an authentic evidence of the diſtinction of caſts having been eſtabliſhed in India at the time when theſe works were finiſhed.

2. INSTEAD of caverns, the original places of worſhip, which could be formed only in particular ſituations, the devotion of the people ſoon began to raiſe temples in honour of their deities in other parts of India. The ſtructure of theſe was at firſt extremely ſimple. They were pyramids of large dimenſion, and had no light within but what came from a ſmall door. After having been long accuſtomed to perform all the rites of religion in the gloom of caverns, the Indians were naturally led to conſider the ſolemn darkneſs of ſuch a manſion as ſacred. Some Pagodas in this firſt ſtile of building ſtill remain in Indoſtan. Drawings of two of theſe at Deogur, and of a third near Tanjore in the Carnatic, all fabrics of great antiquity, have been publiſhed by Mr. Hodges[s], and though they are rude ſtructures, they are of ſuch magnitude as muſt have required the power of ſome conſiderable ſtate to rear them.

[s] N° VI.

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3. In proportion to the progreſs of the different countries of India in opulence and refinement, the ſtructure of their temples gradually improved. From plain buildings they became highly ornamented fabrics, and, both by their extent and magnificence, are monuments of the power and taſte of the people by whom they were erected. In this highly finiſhed ſtile there are pagodas of great antiquity in different parts of Indoſtan, particularly in the Southern provinces, which were not expoſed to the deſtructive violence of Mahomedan zeal[h]. In order to aſſiſt my readers in forming ſuch an idea of theſe buildings as may enable them to judge with reſpect to the early ſtate of arts in India, I ſhall briefly deſcribe two, of which we have the moſt accurate accounts. The entry to the Pagoda of Chillambrum near Porto Novo, on the Coromandel coaſt, held in high veneration on account of its antiquity, is by a ſtately gate under a pyramid an hundred and twenty-two feet in height, built with large ſtones above forty feet long, and more than five feet ſquare, and all covered with plates of copper, adorned with an immenſe variety of figures neatly executed. The whole ſtructure extends one thouſand three hundred and thirty-two feet in one direction, and nine hundred and thirty-ſix in

[h] See NOTE LXIV.

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another. Some of the ornamental parts are finiſhed with an elegance entitled to the admiration of the moſt ingenious artiſts[1]. The Pagoda of Seringham, ſuperior in ſanctity to that of Chillambrum, ſurpaſſes it as much in grandeur; and, fortunately, I can convey a more perfect idea of it by adopting the words of an elegant and accurate hiſtorian. This Pagoda is ſituated about a mile from the weſtern extremity of the iſland of Seringham, formed by the diviſion of the great river Caveri into two channels. "It is compoſed of ſeven ſquare "inclоſures, one within the other, the walls "of which are twenty-five feet high, and four "thick. Theſe incloſures are three hundred and "fifty feet diſtant from one another, and each "has four large gates with a high tower; which "are placed, one in the middle of each ſide "of the incloſure, and oppoſite to the four "cardinal points. The outward wall is near "four miles in circumference, and its gateway "to the South is ornamented with pillars, ſeveral "of which are ſingle ſtones thirty-three feet "long, and nearly five in diameter; and thoſe "which form the roof are ſtill larger; in the "inmoſt incloſures are the chapels. About

[1] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 44, &c. Voy. de M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 217.

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" half a mile to the Eaſt of Seringham, and " nearer to the Caveri than the Coleroon, is " another large Pagoda, called Jembikiſma; but " this has only one incloſure. The extreme " veneration in which Seringham is held, " ariſes from a belief that it contains that iden- " tical image of the god Wiſtchnu, which uſed " to be worſhipped by the god Brahma. Pil- " grims from all parts of the peninſula come here " to obtain abſolution, and none come without " an offering of money; and a large part of " the revenue of the iſland is allotted for the " maintenance of the Brahmins who inhabit " the Pagoda; and theſe, with their families, " formerly compoſed a multitude not leſs than " forty thouſand ſouls, maintained, without la- " bour, by the liberality of ſuperſtition. Here, " as in all the other great Pagodas of India, " the Brahmins live in a ſubordination which " knows no reſiſtance, and ſlumber in a vo- " luptuouſneſs which knows no wants[k]."

THE other ſpecies of public buildings which I mentioned, were thoſe erected for the defence of the country. From the immenſe plains of Indoſtan there ariſe, in different parts, emi-

[k] Orme's Hiſt. of Milit. Tranſact. of Indoſtan, vol. i. p. 178.

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nences and rocks formed by nature to be places of ſtrength. Of theſe the natives early took poſſeſſion, and fortifying them with works of various kinds, rendered them almoſt impregnable ſtations. There ſeems to have been, in ſome diſtant age, a period of general turbulence and danger in India, when ſuch retreats were deemed eſſentially neceſſary to public ſafety; for among the duties of magiſtrates preſcribed by the Pundits, one is, "that he ſhall erect a "ſtrong fort in the place where he chuſes to "reſide; and ſhall build a wall on all the four "ſides of it, with towers and battlements, and "ſhall make a full ditch around it[l]." Of theſe fortreſſes ſeveral remain, which, both from the appearance of the buildings and from the tradition of the natives, muſt have been conſtructed in very remote times. Mr. Hodges has publiſhed views of three of theſe, one of Chunar Gur, ſituated upon the river Ganges, about ſixteen miles above the city of Benares[m]; the ſecond, of Gwallior, about eighty miles to the ſouth of Agra[n]; the third, of Bidjegur, in the territory of Bénares[o]. They are all, particularly Gwallior, works of conſiderable magnitude and ſtrength. The fortreſſes in Ben-

[l] Introd. to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cxi.
[m] N° I. [n] N° II. [o] N° III.

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gal, however, are not to be compared with ſeveral in the Deccan. Aſſeergur, Burhampour, and Dowlatabad, are deemed by the natives to be impregnable [p]; and I am aſſured, by a good judge, that Aſſeergur is indeed a moſt ſtupendous work, and ſo advantageouſly ſituated, that it would be extremely difficult to reduce it by force. Adoni, of which Tippoo Sultaun lately rendered himſelf maſter, is not inferior to any of them, either in ſtrength or importance [q].

Nor is it only from ſurveying their public works that we are juſtified in aſſerting the early proficiency of the Indians in elegant and uſeful arts: we are led to form the ſame concluſion by a view of thoſe productions of their ingenuity, which were the chief articles of their trade with foreign nations. Of theſe the labours of the Indian loom and needle have, in every age, been the moſt celebrated; and fine linen is conjectured, with ſome probability, to have been called by the ancients *Sindon*, from the name of the river Indus or Sindus, near which it was wrought in the higheſt perfection [r]. The cot-

[p] Rennell, Mem. p. 133. 139.
[q] Hiſtorical and Political View of the Deccan, p. 13.
[r] Sir William Jones's Third Diſcourſe, p. 428.

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ton manufactures of India ſeem anciently to have been as much admired as they are at preſent, not only for their delicate texture, but for the elegance with which ſome of them are embroidered, and the beautiful colour of the flowers with which others are adorned. From the earlieſt period of European intercourſe with India, that country has been diſtinguiſhed for the number and excellence of the ſubſtances for dying various colours, with which it abounded[s]. The dye of the deep blue colour in higheſt eſtimation among the Romans bore the name of *Indicum*[t]. From India too, the ſubſtance uſed in dying a bright red colour, ſeems to have been imported[u]; and it is well known that both in the cotton and ſilk ſtuffs which we now receive from India, the blue and the red are the colours of moſt conſpicuous luſtre and beauty. But however much the ancients may have admired theſe productions of Indian art, ſome circumſtances, which I have already mentioned, rendered their demand for the cotton manufactures of India, far inferior to that of modern times; and this has occaſioned

[s] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1018. A. 1024. B.

[t] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxxv. c. 6. § 27.

[u] Salmaſius Exercit. Plinianæ in Solin. 180, &c. 810. Salmaſius de Homionymis Hyles Jatrica, c. 107. See NOTE LXV.

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the information concerning them which we receive from the Greek and Roman writers to be very imperfect. We may conclude, however, from the wonderful reſemblance of the ancient ſtate of India to the modern, that, in every period, the productions of their looms were as various as beautiful. The ingenuity of the Indians in other kinds of workmanſhip, particularly in metals and in ivory, is mentioned with praiſe by ancient authors, but without any particular deſcription of their nature[x]. Of theſe early productions of Indian artiſts, there are now ſome ſpecimens in Europe, from which it appears that they were acquainted with the method of engraving upon the hardeſt ſtones and gems; and, both in the elegance of their deſigns and in neatneſs of execution, had arrived at a conſiderable degree of excellence. An ingenious writer maintains, that the art of engraving on gems was probably an Indian invention, and certainly was early improved there, and he ſupports this opinion by ſeveral plauſible arguments[y]. The Indian engraved gems, of which he has publiſhed deſcriptions, appear to be the workmanſhip of a very remote

[x] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1044. B. Dionyſ. Perieges, verſ. 1016.

[y] Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved gems, &c. p. xii. &c.

period,

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period, as the legends on them are in the Sanſkreet language [z].

But it is not alone from the improved ſtate of mechanic arts in India, that we conclude its inhabitants to have been highly civilized; a proof of this, ſtill more convincing, may be deduced from the early and extraordinary productions of their genius in the fine arts. This evidence is rendered more intereſting, by being derived from a ſource of knowledge which the laudable curioſity of our countrymen has opened to the people of Europe within theſe few years. That all the ſcience and literature poſſeſſed by the Brahmins, were contained in books written in a language underſtood by a few only of the moſt learned among them, is a fact which has long been known; and all the Europeans ſettled in India during three centuries, have complained that the Brahmins obſtinately refuſed to inſtruct any perſon in this language. But at length, by addreſs, mild treatment, and a perſuaſion, that the earneſtneſs with which inſtruction was ſolicited, proceeded not from any intention of turning their religion into deriſion, but from a deſire of acquiring a perfect knowledge of their ſciences and literature, the ſcruples of

[z] Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved Gems, vol. i. p. 74. vol. ii. plate xiii.

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the Brahmins have been overcome. Several Britiſh gentlemen are now completely maſters of the Sanſkreet language. The myſterious veil, formerly deemed impenetrable, is removed; and, in the courſe of five years, the curioſity of the public has been gratified by two publications as ſingular as they were unexpected. The one is a tranſlation, by Mr. Wilkins, of an Epiſode from the *Mahabarat*, an Epic poem, in high eſtimation among the Hindoos, compoſed, according to their account, by Kreeſhna Dwypayen Veias, the moſt eminent of all their Brahmins, above three thouſand years before the Chriſtian æra. The other is *Sacontala*, a dramatic poem, written about a century before the birth of Chriſt, tranſlated by Sir William Jones. I ſhall endeavonr to give my readers ſuch a view of the ſubject and compoſition of each of theſe, as may enable them to eſtimate, in ſome meaſure, the degree of merit which they poſſeſs.

The Mahabarat is a voluminous poem, conſiſting of upwards of four hundred thouſand lines. Mr. Wilkins has tranſlated more than a third of it; but only a ſhort epiſode, intitled Baghvat-Geeta, is hitherto publiſhed, and from this ſpecimen we muſt form an opinion with reſpect to the whole. The ſubject of the poem is a famous civil war between two branches of

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the royal houſe of Bhaurat. When the forces on each ſide were formed in the field, and ready to decide the conteſt by the ſword, Arjoon, the favourite and pupil of the god Kreeſhna, who accompanied him in this hour of danger, requeſted of him to cauſe his chariot to advance between the two hoſtile armies. He looked at both armies, and beheld, on either ſide, none but grandſires, uncles, couſins, tutors, ſons, and brothers, near relàtions or boſom friends; and when he had gazed for a while, and ſaw theſe prepared for the fight, he was ſeized with extreme pity and compunction, and uttered his ſorrow in the following words:—"Having be-
"held, O *Kreeſhna!* my kindred thus waiting
"anxious for the fight, my members fail me,
"my countenance withereth, the hair ſtandeth
"an end upon my body, and all my frame
"trembleth with horror; even *Gandeev*, my
"bow, eſcapeth from my hand, and my ſkin
"is parched and dried up.—When I have de-
"ſtroyed my kindred, ſhall I longer look for
"happineſs? I wiſh not for victory, *Kreeſhna;*
"I want not dominion; I want not pleaſure;
"for what is dominion and the enjoyments of
"life, or even life itſelf, when thoſe for whom
"dominion, pleaſure, and enjoyment were to
"be coveted, have abandoned life and fortune,
"and ſtand here in the field ready for the
"battle.

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" battle. Tutors, ſons, and fathers, grandſires, " and grandſons, uncles, nephews, conſins, kin- " dred, and friends! Although they would " kill me, I wiſh not to fight them; no not " even for the dominion of the three regions " of the univerſe, much leſs for this little earth[a]." In order to remove his ſcruples, Kreeſhna informs him what was the duty of a prince of the Chehteree, or military caſt, when called to act in ſuch a ſituation, and incites him to perform it by a variety of moral and philoſophical arguments, the nature of which I ſhall have occaſion to conſider particularly in another part of this Diſſertation. In this dialogue between Kreeſhna and his pupil, there are ſeveral paſſages which give an high idea of the genius of the poet. The ſpeech of Arjoon I have quoted, in which he expreſſes the anguiſh of his ſoul, muſt have ſtruck every reader as beautiful and pathetic; and I ſhall afterwards produce a deſcription of the Supreme Being, and of the reverence wherewith he ſhould be worſhipped, which is ſublime. But while theſe excite our admiration, and confirm us in the belief of a high degree of civilization in that country where ſuch a work was produced; we are ſurpriſed at the defect of taſte and of

[a] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 30, 31.

art

art in the manner of introducing this Epiſode. Two powerful armies are drawn up in battle-array, eager for the fight; a young hero and his inſtructor are deſcribed as ſtanding in a chariot of war between them; that ſurely was not the moment for teaching him the principles of philoſophy, and delivering eighteen lectures of metaphyſics and theology.

With regard, however, both to the dramatic and epic poetry of the Hindoos, we labour under the diſadvantage of being obliged to form an opinion from a ſingle ſpecimen of each, and that of the latter, too, (as it is only a part of a large work,) an imperfect one. But if, from ſuch ſcanty materials, we may venture upon any deciſion, it muſt be, that of the two, the drama ſeems to have been conducted with the moſt correct taſte. This will appear from the obſervations which I now proceed to make upon Sacontala.

It is only to nations conſiderably advanced in refinement, that the drama is a favourite entertainment. The Greeks had been for a good time a poliſhed people; Alcæus and Sappho had compoſed their Odes, and Thales and Anaximander had opened their ſchools, before Tragedy made its firſt rude eſſay in the cart of Theſpis; and a

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good time elapſed before it attained to any conſiderable degree of excellence. From the drama of Sacontala, then, we muſt form an advantageous idea of the ſtate of improvement in that ſociety to whoſe taſte it was ſuited. In eſtimating its merit, however, we muſt not apply to it rules of criticiſm drawn from the literature and taſte of nations with which its author was altogether unacquainted; we muſt not expect the unities of the Greek theatre; we muſt not meaſure it by our own ſtandard of propriety. Allowance muſt be made for local cuſtoms, and ſingular manners, ariſing from a ſtate of domeſtic ſociety, an order of civil policy, and a ſyſtem of religious opinions, very different from thoſe eſtabliſhed in Europe. Sacontala is not a regular drama, but, like ſome of the plays early exhibited on the Spaniſh and Engliſh theatres, is an hiſtory in dialogue, unfolding events which happened in different places, and during a ſeries of years. When viewed in this light, the fable is in general well arranged, many of the incidents are happily choſen, and the viciſſitudes in the ſituation of the principal perſonages are ſudden and unexpected. The unravelling of the piece, however, though ſome of the circumſtances preparatory to it be introduced with ſkill, is at laſt brought about by the intervention of ſuperior

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beings, which has always a bad effect, and discovers some want of art. But as Sacontala was descended of a celestial nymph, and under the protection of a holy hermit, this heavenly interposition may appear less marvellous, and is extremely agreeable to the Oriental taste. In many places of this drama it is simple and tender, in some pathetic; in others there is a mixture of comic with what is more serious. Of each, examples might be given. I shall select a few of the first, both because simplicity and tenderness are the characteristic beauties of the piece, and because they so little resemble the extravagant imagery and turgid style conspicuous in almost all the specimens of Oriental poetry which have hitherto been published.

SACONTALA, the heroine of the drama, a princess of high birth, had been educated by an holy hermit in a hallowed grove, and had passed the early part of her life in rural occupations and pastoral innocence. When she was about to quit this beloved retreat, and repair to the court of a great monarch, to whom she had been maried, Cana, her foster-father, and her youthful companions, thus bewail their own loss, and express their wishes for her happiness, in a strain of sentiment and language perfectly suited to their pastoral character.

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" HEAR, O ye trees of this hallowed foreſt, " hear and proclaim that Sacontala is going to " the palace of her wedded lord; ſhe, who drank " not, though thirſty, before you were wa- " tered; ſhe, who cropped not, through af- " fection for you, one of your freſh leaves, " though ſhe would have been pleaſed with " ſuch an ornament for her locks; ſhe, whoſe " chief delight was in the ſeaſon when your " branches are ſpangled with flowers!

Chorus of Wood Nymphs.—" May her way " be attended with proſperity! May propi- " tious breezes ſprinkle, for her delight, the " odoriferous duſt of rich bloſſoms! May pools " of clear water, green with the leaves of the " lotos, refreſh her as ſhe walks! and may " ſhady branches be her defence from the " ſcorching ſun-beams!"

SACONTALA, juſt as ſhe was departing from the grove, turns to Cana: " Suffer me, vene- " rable father! to addreſs this Madhavi-creeper, " whoſe red bloſſoms inflame the grove.— *Cana.* " My child, I know thy affection for " it."——*Sacont.* " O moſt radiant of ſhining " plants, receive my embraces, and return " them with thy flexible arms! from this day, " though removed at a fatal diſtance, I ſhall " for

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" for ever be thine.—O beloved father, con-
" sider this creeper as myself!" As she ad-
vances, she again addresses Cana: " Father!
" when yon female antelope, who now moves
" slowly from the weight of the young ones
" with which she is pregnant, shall be deli-
" vered of them, send me, I beg, a kind mes-
" sage with tidings of her safety.—Do not
" forget."——*Cana.* " My beloved! I will
" not forget it."——*Sacontala* [*stopping*].
" Ah! what is it that clings to the skirts of
" my robe, and detains me?"——*Cana.* " It
" is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whose
" mouth, when the sharp points of Cusa
" grass had wounded it, has been so often
" smeared by thee with the healing oil of In-
" gudi; who has been so often fed by thee with
" a handful of Synmaka grains, and now will
" not leave the footsteps of his protectress."
——*Sacont.* " Why dost thou weep, ten-
" der fawn, for me who must leave our com-
" mon dwelling-place?—As thou wast reared
" by me when thou hadst lost thy mother,
" who died soon after thy birth, so will my
" foster-father attend thee, when we are sepa-
" rated, with anxious care.—Return, poor thing,
" return——we must part." [*She bursts into tears.*]——*Cana.* " Thy tears, my child, ill
" suit the occasion; we shall all meet again; be

" firm; ſee the direct road before thee, and
" follow it. When the big tear lurks beneath
" thy beautiful eye-laſhes, let thy reſolution
" check its firſt efforts to diſengage itſelf.—
" In thy paſſage over this earth, where the paths
" are now high, now low, and the true path
" ſeldom diſtinguiſhed, the traces of thy feet
" muſt needs be unequal; but virtue will preſs
" thee right onward [b]."

From this ſpecimen of the Indian drama, every reader of good taſte, I ſhould imagine, will be ſatisfied, that it is only among a people of poliſhed manners and delicate ſentiments that a compoſition ſo ſimple and correct could be produced or reliſhed. I obſerve one inſtance in this drama of that wild extravagance ſo frequent in Oriental poetry. The monarch, in replacing a bracelet which had dropped from the arm of Sacontala, thus addreſſes her: " Look,
" my darling, this is the new moon which left
" the firmament in honour of ſuperior beauty,
" and having deſcended on your enchanting
" wriſt, hath joined both its horns round it in
" the ſhape of a bracelet [c]." But this is the ſpeech of an enraptured young man to his miſtreſs, and in every age and nation exaggerated

[b] Act IV. p. 47, &c.

[c] Act III. p. 36.

praiſe

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praiſe is expected from the mouth of lovers. Dramatic exhibitions ſeem to have been a favourite amuſement of the Hindoos as well as of other civilized nations. "The tragedies, comedies, farces, and muſical pieces of the Indian theatre, would fill as many volumes as that of any nation in ancient or modern Europe. They are all in verſe where the dialogue is elevated, and in proſe where it is familiar; the men of rank and learning are repreſented ſpeaking pure Sanſkreet, and the women Pracrit, which is little more than the language of the Brahmins, melted down by a delicate articulation to the ſoftneſs of Italian; while the low perſons of the drama ſpeak the vulgar dialects of the ſeveral provinces which they are ſuppoſed to inhabit [d]."

V. THE attainments of the Indians in ſcience, furniſh an additional proof of their early civilization. By every perſon who has viſited India in ancient or modern times, its inhabitants, either in tranſactions of private buſineſs, or in the conduct of political affairs, have been deemed not inferior to the people of any nation in ſagacity or in acuteneſs of underſtanding. From

[d] Preface to Sacont. by Sir William Jones, p. ix. See NOTE LXVI.

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the application of ſuch talents to the cultivation of ſcience, an extraordinary degree of proficiency might have been expected. The Indians were, accordingly, early celebrated on that account, and ſome of the moſt eminent of the Greek philoſophers travelled into India, that, by converſing with the ſages of that country, they might acquire ſome portion of the knowledge for which they were diſtinguiſhed [e]. The accounts, however, which we receive from the Greeks and Romans, of the Sciences which attracted the attention of the Indian philoſophers, or of the diſcoveries which they had made in them, are very imperfect. To the reſearches of a few intelligent perſons, who have viſited India during the courſe of the three laſt centuries, we are indebted for more ample and authentic information. But from the reluctance with which the Brahmins communicate their ſciences to ſtrangers, and the inability of Europeans to acquire much knowledge of them, while, like the myſteries of their religion, they were concealed from vulgar eyes in an unknown tongue, this information was acquired ſlowly and with great difficulty. The ſame obſervation, however, which I made concerning our knowledge of the ſtate of the fine arts among the people of

[e] Bruckeri Hiſt. Philoſoph. vol. i. p. 190.

India,

India, is applicable to that of their progreſs in ſcience, and the preſent age is the firſt furniſhed with ſufficient evidence upon which to found a deciſive judgment with reſpect to either.

SCIENCE, when viewed as disjoined from religion, the conſideration of which I reſerve for another head, is employed in contemplating either the operations of the underſtanding, the exerciſe of our moral powers, or the nature and qualities of external objects. The firſt is denominated logic; the ſecond ethics; the third phyſics, or the knowledge of nature. With reſpect to the early progreſs in cultivating each of theſe ſciences in India, we are in poſſeſſion of facts which merit attention.

BUT, prior to the conſideration of them, it is proper to examine the ideas of the Brahmins with reſpect to mind itſelf, for if theſe were not juſt, all their theories concerning its operations muſt have been erroneous and fanciful. The diſtinction between matter and ſpirit appears to have been early known by the philoſophers of India, and to the latter they aſcribed many powers of which they deemed the former to be incapable; and when we recollect how inadequate our conceptions are of every object that does not fall under the cognizance of the

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ſenſes, we may affirm (if allowance be made for a peculiar notion of the Hindoos which ſhall be afterwards explained) that no deſcription of the human ſoul is more ſuited to the dignity of its nature than that given by the author of the Mahabarat. "Some," ſays he, "regard the "ſoul as a wonder, others hear of it with aſtoniſh-"ment, but no one knoweth it. The weapon di-"videth it not; the fire burneth it not; the water "corrupteth it not; the wind drieth it not away; "for it is indiviſible, inconſumable, incorruptible; "it is eternal, univerſal, permanent, immovable; "it is inviſible, inconceivable, and unalter-"able[f]." After this view of the ſentiments of the Brahmins concerning mind itſelf, we may proceed to conſider their ideas with reſpect to each of the ſciences, in that tripartite arrangement which I mentioned.

1ſt, LOGIC and Metaphyſics. On no ſubject has the human underſtanding been more exerciſed than in analyſing its own operations. The various powers of the mind have been examined and defined. The origin and progreſs of our ideas have been traced; and proper rules have been preſcribed, of proceeding from the obſervation of facts to the eſtabliſhment of prin-

[f] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 37.

ciples,

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ciples, or from the knowledge of principles to form arrangements of ſcience. The philoſophers of ancient Greece were highly celebrated for their proficiency in theſe abſtruſe ſpeculations; and in their diſcuſſions and arrangements, diſcovered ſuch depth of thought and acuteneſs of diſcernment, that their ſyſtems of Logic, particularly that of the Peripatetic School, have been deemed moſt diſtinguiſhed efforts of human reaſon.

But ſince we became acquainted, in ſome degree, with the literature and ſcience of the Hindoos, we find that as ſoon as men arrive at that ſtage in ſocial life, when they can turn their attention to ſpeculative inquiries, the human mind will, in every region of the earth, diſplay nearly the ſame powers, and proceed in its inveſtigations and diſcoveries by nearly ſimilar ſteps. From Abul Fazel's compendium of the philoſophy [g] of the Hindoos, the knowledge of which he acquired, as he informs us, by aſſociating intimately with the moſt learned men of the nation; from the ſpecimen of their logical diſcuſſions contained in that portion of the Shaſtra publiſhed by Colonel Dow [h], and from

[g] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 95, &c.
[h] Diſſertation, p. xxxix, &c.

many

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many paſſages in the Baghvat-Geeta, it appears that the ſame ſpeculations which occupied the philoſophers of Greece had engaged the attention of the Indian Brahmins; and the theories of the former, either concerning the qualities of external objects, or the nature of our own ideas, were not more ingenious than thoſe of the latter. To define with accuracy, to diſtinguiſh with acuteneſs, and to reaſon with ſubtlety, are characteriſtics of both; and in both, the ſame exceſs of refinement, in attempting to analyſe thoſe operations of mind which the faculties of man were not formed to comprehend, led ſometimes to the moſt falſe and dangerous concluſions. That ſceptical philoſophy, which denies the exiſtence of the material world, and aſſerts nothing to be real but our own ideas, ſeems to have been known in India as well as in Europe[1]; and the ſages of the Eaſt, as they were indebted to philoſophy for the knowledge of many important truths, were not more exempt than thoſe of the Weſt from its deluſions and errors.

2d, ETHICS. This ſcience, which has for its object, to aſcertain what diſtinguiſhes virtue from vice, to inveſtigate what motives ſhould

[1] Dow's Diſſertation, p. lvii. Ayeen Akbery, vol. III. p. 128.

prompt

prompt men to act, and to prescribe rules for the conduct of life, as it is of all other the most interesting, seems to have deeply engaged the attention of the Brahmins. Their sentiments with respect to these points were various, and, like the philosophers of Greece, the Brahmins were divided into sects, distinguished by maxims and tenets often diametrically opposite. That sect with whose opinions we are, fortunately, best acquainted, had established a system of morals, founded on principles the most generous and dignified which unassisted reason is capable of discovering. Man, they taught, was formed, not for speculation or indolence, but for action. He is born, not for himself alone, but for his fellow men. The happiness of the society of which he is a member, the good of mankind, are his ultimate and highest objects. In chusing what to prefer or to reject, the justness and propriety of his own choice are the only considerations to which he should attend. The events which may follow his actions are not in his own power, and whether they be prosperous or adverse, as long as he is satisfied with the purity of the motives which induced him to act, he can enjoy that approbation of his own mind, which constitutes genuine happiness, independent of the power of fortune or the opinions of other men. "Man (says the author of the Mahabarat) en-

"joyeth

" joyeth not freedom from action. Every man
" is involuntarily urged to act by thoſe prin-
" ciples which are inherent in his nature. He
" who reſtraineth his active faculties, and fit-
" teth down with his mind attentive to the
" objects of his ſenſes, may be called one of
" an aſtrayed ſoul. The man is praiſed, who,
" having ſubdued all his paſſions, performeth
" with his active faculties all the functions of
" life unconcerned about the event [k]. Let
" the motive be in the deed, and not in the
" event. Be not one whoſe motive for action
" is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be
" ſpent in inaction. Depend upon application,
" perform thy duty, abandon all thought of
" the conſequence, and make the event equal,
" whether it terminate in good or in evil; for
" ſuch an equality is called *Yog* [i. e. attention
" to what is ſpiritual]. Seek an aſylum then
" in wiſdom alone; for the miſerable and un-
" happy are ſo on account of the event of things.
" Men who are endued with true wiſdom are
" unmindful of good or evil in this world.
" Study then to obtain this application of thy
" underſtanding, for ſuch application in bu-
" ſineſs is a precious art. Wiſe men who have
" abandoned all thought of the fruit which is

[k] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 44.

" produced

"produced from their actions, are freed from "the chains of birth, and go to the regions of "eternal happineſs[1]."

FROM theſe and other paſſages which I might have quoted, we learn that the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the Stoical ſchool were taught in India many ages before the birth of Zeno, and inculcated with a perſuaſive earneſtneſs nearly reſembling that of Epictetus; and it is not without aſtoniſhment that we find the tenets of this manly active philoſophy, which ſeem to be formed only for men of the moſt vigorous ſpirit, preſcribed as the rule of conduct to a race of people more eminent (as is generally ſuppoſed) for the gentleneſs of their diſpoſition than for the elevation of their minds.

3d, PHYSICS. In all the ſciences which contribute towards extending our knowledge of nature, in mathematics, mechanics, and aſtronomy, Arithmetic is of elementary uſe. In whatever country then we find that ſuch attention has been paid to the improvement of arithmetic as to render its operations moſt eaſy and correct, we may preſume that the ſciences

[1] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 40.

depending

depending upon it have attained a ſuperior degree of perfection. Such improvement of this ſcience we find in India. While, among the Greeks and Romans, the only method uſed for the notation of numbers was by the letters of the alphabet, which neceſſarily rendered arithmetical calculation extremely tedious and operoſe, the Indians had, from time immemorial, employed for the ſame purpoſe the ten cyphers, or figures, now univerſally known, and by means of them performed every operation in arithmetic with the greateſt facility and expedition. By the happy invention of giving a different value to each figure according to its change of place, no more than ten figures are needed in calculations the moſt complex, and of any given extent; and arithmetic is the moſt perfect of all the ſciences. The Arabians, not long after their ſettlement in Spain, introduced this mode of notation into Europe, and were candid enough to acknowledge that they had derived the knowledge of it from the Indians. Though the advantages of this mode of notation are obvious and great, yet ſo ſlowly do mankind adopt new inventions, that the uſe of it was for ſome time confined to ſcience; by degrees, however, men of buſineſs relinquiſhed the former cumberſome method of computation by letters; and

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the Indian arithmetic came into general use throughout Europe[m]. It is now so familiar and simple, that the ingenuity of the people, to whom we are indebted for the invention, is less observed and less celebrated than it merits.

The astronomy of the Indians is a proof still more conspicuous of their extraordinary progress in science. The attention and success with which they studied the motions of the heavenly bodies were so little known to the Greeks and Romans, that it is hardly mentioned by them but in the most cursory manner[n]. But as soon as the Mahomedans established an intercourse with the natives of India, they observed and celebrated the superiority of their astronomical knowledge. Of the Europeans who visited India after the communication with it by the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, M. Bernier, an inquisitive and philosophical traveller, was one of the first who learned that the Indians had long applied to the study of astronomy, and had made considerable progress in that science[o]. His information, however, seems to have been very general and imperfect.

[m] Montucla Hist. des Mathemat. tom. i. p. 360, &c.

[n] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1047. A. Dion. Perieg. v. 1173.

[o] Voyages, tom. ii. p. 145, &c.

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We are indebted for the firſt ſcientific proof of the great proficiency of the Indians in aſtronomical knowledge, to M. de la Loubere, who, A. D. 1687. on his return from his embaſſy to Siam, brought with him an extract from a Siameſe manuſcript, which contained tables and rules for calculating the places of the ſun and moon. The manner in which theſe tables were conſtructed rendered the principles on which they were founded extremely obſcure, and it required a commentator as converſant in aſtronomical calculation as the celebrated Caſſini, to explain the meaning of this curious fragment. The epoch of the Siameſe tables correſponds to the 21ſt of March, A. D. 638. Another ſet of tables was tranſmitted from Chriſnabouram, in the Carnatic, the epoch of which anſwers to the 10th of March, A. D. 1491. A third ſet of tables came from Narſapour, and the epoch of them goes no farther back than A. D. 1569. The fourth and moſt curious ſet of tables was publiſhed by M. le Gentil, to whom they were communicated by a learned Brahmin of Tirvalore, a ſmall town on the Coromandel coaſt, about twelve miles weſt of Negapatam. The epoch of theſe tables is of high antiquity, and coincides with the beginning of the celebrated æra of the Calyougham or Collee Jogue, which commenced, according to the Indian account, three

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three thousand one hundred and two years before the birth of Christ [p].

These four sets of tables have been examined and compared by M. Bailly, who with singular felicity of genius has conjoined an uncommon degree of eloquence with the patient researches of an astronomer, and the profound investigations of a geometrician. His calculations have been verified, and his reasonings have been illustrated and extended by Mr. Playfair, in a very masterly Dissertation, published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh [q].

Instead of attempting to follow them in reasonings and calculations, which, from their nature, are often abstruse and intricate, I shall satisfy myself with giving such a general view of them as is suited to a popular work. This, I hope, may convey a proper idea of what has been published concerning the astronomy of India, a subject too curious and important to be omitted in any account of the state of science in that country; and, without interposing any judgment of my own, I shall leave each of my readers to form his own opinion.

[p] See NOTE LXVII. [q] Vol. ii. p. 135.

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It may be conſidered as the general reſult of all the inquiries, reaſonings, and calculations, with reſpect to Indian aſtronomy, which have hitherto been made public, "That the motion "of the heavenly bodies, and more particularly "their ſituation at the commencement of the "different epochs to which the four ſets of "tables refer, are aſcertained with great accu-"racy; and that many of the elements of their "calculations, eſpecially for very remote ages, "are verified by an aſtoniſhing coincidence "with the tables of the modern aſtronomy of "Europe, when improved by the lateſt and "moſt nice deductions from the theory of gra-"vitation." Theſe concluſions are rendered peculiarly intereſting, by the evidence which they afford of an advancement in ſcience unexampled in the hiſtory of rude nations. The Indian Brahmins, who annually circulate a kind of almanac, containing aſtronomical predictions of ſome of the more remarkable phenomena in the heavens, ſuch as the new and full moons, the eclipſes of the ſun and moon, are in poſſeſſion of certain methods of calculation, which, upon examination, are found to involve in them a very extenſive ſyſtem of aſtronomical knowledge. M. le Gentil, a French aſtronomer, had an opportunity, while in India, of obſerving

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two eclipſes of the moon which had been calculated by a Brahmin, and he found the error in either to be very inconſiderable.

THE accuracy of theſe reſults is leſs ſurpriſing than the juſtneſs and ſcientific nature of the principles on which the tables, by which they calculate, are conſtructed. For the method of predicting eclipſes which is followed by the Brahmins, is of a kind altogether different from any that has been found in the poſſeſſion of rude nations in the infancy of aſtronomy. In Chaldæa, and even in Greece, in the early ages, the method of calculating eclipſes was founded on the obſervation of a certain period or cycle, after which the eclipſes of the ſun and moon return nearly in the ſame order; but there was no attempt to analyſe the different circumſtances on which the eclipſe depends, or to deduce its phenomena from a preciſe knowledge of the motions of the ſun and moon. This laſt was reſerved for a more advanced period, when geometry, as well as arithmetic, were called in to the aſſiſtance of aſtronomy, and if it was attempted at all, ſeems not to have been attempted with ſucceſs before the age of Hipparchus. It is a method of this ſuperior kind, founded on principles and on an analyſis of the motions of the ſun and moon, which guides the calculations of the Brahmins,

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and they never employ any of the groſſer eſtimations, which were the pride of the firſt aſtronomers in Egypt and Chaldæa.

THE Brahmins of the preſent times are guided in their calculations by theſe principles, though they do not now underſtand them; they know only the uſe of the tables which are in their poſſeſſion, but are unacquainted with the method of their conſtruction. The Brahmin who viſited M. le Gentil at Pondicherry, and inſtructed him in the uſe of the Indian tables, had no knowledge of the principles of his art, and diſcovered no curioſity concerning the nature of M. le Gentil's obſervations, or about the inſtruments which he employed. He was equally ignorant with reſpect to the authors of theſe tables; and whatever is to be learnt concerning the time or place of their conſtruction, muſt be deduced from the tables themſelves. One ſet of theſe tables (as was formerly obſerved) profeſs to be as old as the beginning of the Calyougham, or to go back to the year 3102 before the Chriſtian æra; but as nothing (it may be ſuppoſed) is eaſier than for an aſtronomer to give to his tables what date he pleaſes, and, by calculating backwards, to eſtabliſh an epoch of any aſſigned antiquity, the pretenſions of the Indian aſtronomy to ſo remote an origin

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origin are not to be admitted without examination.

THAT examination has accordingly been inſtituted by M. Bailly, and the reſult of his inquiries is aſſerted to be, that the aſtronomy of India is founded on obſervations which cannot be of a much later date than the period above mentioned. For the Indian tables repreſent the ſtate of the heavens at that period with aſtoniſhing exactneſs; and there is between them and the calculations of our modern aſtronomy ſuch a conformity, with reſpect to thoſe ages, as could reſult from nothing, but from the authors of the former having accurately copied from nature, and having delineated truly the face of the heavens, in the age wherein they lived. In order to give ſome idea of the high degree of accuracy in the Indian tables, I ſhall ſelect a few inſtances of it, out of many that might be produced. The place of the ſun for the aſtronomical epoch at the beginning of the Calyougham, as ſtated in the tables of Tiruvalore, is only forty-ſeven minutes greater than by the tables of M. de la Caille, when corrected by the calculations of M. de la Grange. The place of the moon, in the ſame tables, for the ſame epoch, is only thirty-ſeven minutes different from the tables of Mayer. The

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tables of Ptolemy, for that epoch, are erroneous no leſs than ten degrees with reſpect to the place of the ſun, and eleven degrees with reſpect to that of the moon. The acceleration of the moon's motion, reckoning from the beginning of the Calyougham to the preſent time, agrees, in the Indian tables, with thoſe of Mayer to a ſingle minute. The inequality of the ſun's motion, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, which were both greater in former ages than they are now, as repreſented in the tables of Tirvalore, are almoſt of the preciſe quantity that the theory of gravitation aſſigns to them three thouſand years before the Chriſtian æra. It is accordingly for thoſe very remote ages (about 5000 years diſtant from the preſent) that their aſtronomy is moſt accurate, and the nearer we come down to our own times, the conformity of its reſults with ours diminiſhes. It ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the time when its rules are moſt accurate, is the time when the obſervations were made on which theſe rules are founded.

In ſupport of this concluſion, M. Bailly maintains that none of all the aſtronomical ſyſtems of Greece or Perſia, or of Tartary, from ſome of which it might be ſuſpected that the Indian tables were copied, can be made to agree with them,

them, especially when we calculate for very remote ages. The superior perfection of the Indian tables becomes always more conspicuous as we go farther back into antiquity. This shews, likewise, how difficult it is to construct any astronomical tables, which will agree with the state of the heavens for a period so remote from the time when the tables were constructed, as four or five thousand years. It is only from astronomy in its most advanced state, such as it has attained in modern Europe, that such accuracy is to be expected.

When an estimate is endeavoured to be made of the geometrical skill necessary for the construction of the Indian tables and rules, it is found to be very considerable; and, beside the knowledge of elementary geometry, it must have required plain and spherical trigonometry, or something equivalent to them, together with certain methods of approximating to the values of geometrical magnitudes, which seem to rise very far above the elements of any of those sciences. Some of these last mark also very clearly (although this has not been observed by M. Bailly) that the places to which these tables are adapted, must be situated between the Tropics, because they are altogether inapplicable at a greater distance from the Equator.

From

From this long induction, the conclusion which seems obviously to result is, that the Indian astronomy is founded upon observations which were made at a very early period; and when we consider the exact agreement of the places which they assign to the sun and moon, and other heavenly bodies, at that epoch, with those deduced from the tables of De la Caille and Mayer, it strongly confirms the truth of the position which I have been endeavouring to establish, concerning the early and high state of civilization in India.

Before I quit this subject, there is one circumstance which merits particular attention. All the knowledge which we have hitherto acquired of the principles and conclusions of Indian astronomy is derived from the southern part of the Carnatic, and the tables are adapted to places situated between the meridian of Cape Comorin and that which passes through the eastern part of Ceylon[r]. The Brahmins in the Carnatic acknowledge that their science of astronomy was derived from the North, and that their method of calculation is denominated *Fakiam*, or New, to distinguish it from the *Siddantam*, or ancient method established at Benares,

[r] Bailly, Dis. Prelim. p. xvii.

which

which they allow to be much more perfect; and we learn from Abul Fazel, that all the aſtronomers of Indoſtan rely entirely upon the precepts contained in a book called *Soorej Sudhant*, compoſed in a very remote period[s]. It is manifeſtly from this book that the method to which the Brahmins of the South gave the name of Siddentam is taken. Benares has been from time immemorial the Athens of India, the reſidence of the moſt learned Brahmins, and the ſeat both of ſcience and literature. There, it is highly probable, whatever remains of the ancient aſtronomical knowledge and diſcoveries of the Brahmins is ſtill preſerved[t]. In an enlightened age and nation, and during a reign diſtinguiſhed by a ſucceſſion of the moſt ſplendid and ſucceſsful undertakings to extend the knowledge of nature, it is an object worthy of public attention, to take meaſures for obtaining poſſeſſion of all that time has ſpared of the philoſophy and inventions of the moſt early and moſt highly civilized people of the Eaſt. It is with peculiar advantages Great Britain may engage in this laudable undertaking. Benares is ſubject to its dominion; the confidence of

[s] Ayeen Akbery, iii. p. 8.

[t] M. Bernier, in the year 1668, ſaw a large hall in Benares filled with the works of the Indian philoſophers, phyſicians, and poets. Voy. ii. p. 148.

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the Brahmins has been ſo far gained as to render them communicative; ſome of our countrymen are acquainted with that ſacred language in which the myſteries both of religion and of ſcience are recorded; movement and activity has been given to a ſpirit of inquiry throughout all the Britiſh eſtabliſhments in India; perſons who viſited that country with other views, though engaged in occupations of a very different kind, are now carrying on ſcientific and literary reſearches with ardour and ſucceſs. Nothing ſeems now to be wanting but that thoſe entruſted with the adminiſtration of the Britiſh empire in India, ſhould enable ſome perſon, capable, by his talents and liberality of ſentiment, of inveſtigating and explaining the more abſtruſe parts of Indian philoſophy, to devote his whole time to that important object. Thus Great Britain may have the glory of exploring fully that extenſive field of unknown ſcience, which the Academicians of France had the merit of firſt opening to the people of Europe [u].

VI. The laſt evidence which I ſhall mention of the early and high civilization of the ancient Indians, is deduced from the conſideration of their religious tenets and practices. The

[u] See NOTE LXVIII.

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inſtitutions of religion, publicly eſtabliſhed in all the extenſive countries ſtretching from the banks of the Indus to Cape Comorin, preſent to view an aſpect nearly ſimilar. They form a regular and complete ſyſtem of ſuperſtition, ſtrengthened and upheld by every thing which can excite the reverence and ſecure the attachment of the people. The temples, conſecrated to their deities, are magnificent, and adorned not only with rich offerings, but with the moſt exquiſite works in painting and ſculpture, which the artiſts, higheſt in eſtimation among them, were capable of executing. The rites and ceremonies of their worſhip are pompous and ſplendid, and the performance of them not only mingles in all the more momentous tranſactions of common life, but conſtitutes an eſſential part of them. The Brahmins, who, as miniſters of religion, preſide in all its functions, are elevated above every other order of men, by an origin deemed not only more noble, but acknowledged to be ſacred. They have eſtabliſhed among themſelves a regular hierarchy and gradation of ranks, which, by ſecuring ſubordination in their own order, adds weight to their authority, and gives them a more abſolute dominion over the minds of the people. This dominion they ſupport by the command of the immenſe revenues with

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which the liberality of princes, and the zeal of pilgrims and devotees, have enriched their pagodas *.

It is far from my intention to enter into any minute detail with respect to this vast and complicated system of superstition. An attempt to enumerate the multitude of deities which are the objects of adoration in India; to describe the splendour of worship in their Pagodas, and the immense variety of their rites and ceremonies; to recount the various attributes and functions which the craft of priests, or the credulity of the people, have ascribed to their divinities; especially if I were to accompany all this with a review of the numerous and often fanciful speculations and theories of learned men on this subject, would require a work of great magnitude. I shall, therefore, on this, as on some of the former heads, confine myself to the precise point which I have kept uniformly in view, and by considering the state of religion in India, I shall endeavour not only to throw additional light on the state of civilization in that country, but I flatter myself that, at the same time, I shall be able to give what may be considered as a sketch and outline of the

* Roger. Porte Ouverte, p. 59. 209, &c.

history

history and progress of superstition and false religion in every region of the earth.

I. We may observe, that, in every country, the received mythology, or system of superstitious belief, with all the rites and ceremonies which it prescribes, is formed in the infancy of society, in rude and barbarous times. True religion is as different from superstition in its origin, as in its nature. The former is the offspring of reason cherished by science, and attains to its highest perfection in ages of light and improvement. Ignorance and fear give birth to the latter, and it is always in the darkest periods that it acquires the greatest vigour. That numerous part of the human species whose lot is labour, whose principal and almost sole occupation is to secure subsistence, has neither leisure nor capacity for entering into that path of intricate and refined speculation, which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of rational religion. When the intellectual powers are just beginning to unfold, and their first feeble exertions are directed towards a few objects of primary necessity and use; when the faculties of the mind are so limited as not to have formed general and abstract ideas; when language is so barren as to be destitute of names to distinguish

any thing not perceivable by ſome of the ſenſes; it is prepoſterous to expect that men ſhould be capable of tracing the relation between effects and their cauſes; or to ſuppoſe that they ſhould riſe from the contemplation of the former to the diſcovery of the latter, and form juſt conceptions of one Supreme Being, as the Creator and Governor of the univerſe. The idea of creation is ſo familiar, wherever the mind is enlarged by ſcience, and illuminated by revelation, that we ſeldom reflect how profound and abſtruſe the idea is, or conſider what progreſs man muſt have made in obſervation and reſearch, before he could arrive at any diſtinct knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. But even in its rude ſtate, the human mind, formed for religion, opens to the reception of ideas, which are deſtined, when corrected and refined, to be the great ſource of conſolation amidſt the calamities of life. Theſe apprehenſions, however, are originally indiſtinct and perplexed, and ſeem to be ſuggeſted rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for bleſſings received. While nature holds on her courſe with uniform and undiſturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits reſulting from it, without much inquiry concerning its cauſe. But every deviation from

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this regular courſe rouſes and aſtoniſhes them. When they behold events to which they are not accuſtomed, they ſearch for the cauſes of them with eager curioſity. Their underſtanding is often unable to diſcover theſe, but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without heſitation. It aſcribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of inviſible beings, and ſuppoſes the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, to be the immediate effect of their agency. Alarmed by theſe natural evils, and expoſed, at the ſame time, to many dangers and diſaſters, which are unavoidable in the early and uncivilized ſtate of ſociety, men have recourſe for protection to power ſuperior to what is human, and the firſt rites or practices which bear any reſemblance to acts of religion, have it for their object to avert evils which they ſuffer or dread *.

II. As ſuperſtition and falſe religion take their riſe, in every country, from nearly the ſame ſentiments and apprehenſions, the inviſible beings, who are the firſt objects of veneration,

* In the ſecond volume of the Hiſtory of America, p. 183. of fifth edition, I gave nearly a ſimilar account of the origin of falſe religion. Inſtead of labouring to convey the ſame ideas in different language, I have inſerted here ſome paragraphs in the ſame words I then uſed.

have everywhere a near reſemblance. To conceive an idea of one ſuperintending mind, capable of arranging and directing all the various operations of nature, ſeems to be an attainment far beyond the powers of man in the more early ſtages of his progreſs. His theories, more ſuited to the limited ſphere of his own obſervation, are not ſo refined. He ſuppoſes that there is a diſtinct cauſe of every remarkable effect, and aſcribes to a ſeparate power every event which attracts his attention, or excites his terror. He fancies that it is the province of one deity to point the lightning, and, with an awful ſound, to hurl the irreſiſtible thunderbolt at the head of the guilty; that another rides in the whirlwind, and, at his pleaſure, raiſes or ſtills the tempeſt; that a third rules over the ocean; that a fourth is the god of battles; that, while malevolent powers ſcatter the ſeeds of animoſity and diſcord, and kindle in the breaſt thoſe angry paſſions which give riſe to war, and terminate in deſtruction, others, of a nature more benign, by inſpiring the hearts of men with kindneſs and love, ſtrengthen the bonds of ſocial union, augment the happineſs, and increaſe the number of the human race.

WITHOUT deſcending farther into detail, or attempting to enumerate that infinite multitude of

of deities to which the fancy or the fears of men have allotted the direction of the ſeveral departments in nature, we may recogniſe a ſtriking uniformity of features in the ſyſtems of ſuperſtition eſtabliſhed throughout every part of the earth. The leſs men have advanced beyond the ſtate of ſavage life, and the more ſlender their acquaintance with the operations of nature, the fewer were their deities in number, and the more compendious was their theological creed; but as their mind gradually opened, and their knowledge continued to extend, the objects of their veneration multiplied, and the articles of their faith became more numerous. This took place remarkably among the Greeks in Europe, and the Indians in Aſia, the two people in thoſe great diviſions of the earth, who were moſt early civilized, and to whom, for that reaſon, I ſhall confine all my obſervations. They believed, that over every movement in the natural world, and over every function in civil or domeſtic life, even the moſt common and trivial, a particular deity preſided. The manner in which they arranged the ſtations of theſe ſuperintending powers, and the offices which they allotted to each, were in many reſpects the ſame. What is ſuppoſed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune, of Æolus, of Mars, of Venus, according to the mythology of the Weſt, is aſcribed in the

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East to the agency of Agnée, the god of fire; Varoon, the god of oceans; Vayoo, the god of wind[y]; Cama, the god of love; and a variety of other divinities.

THE ignorance and credulity of men having thus peopled the heavens with imaginary beings, they aſcribed to them ſuch qualities and actions as they deemed ſuitable to their character and functions. It is one of the benefits derived from true religion, that by ſetting before men a ſtandard of perfect excellence, which they ſhould have always in their eye, and endeavour to reſemble, it may be ſaid to bring down virtue from heaven to earth, and to form the human mind after a divine model. In fabricating ſyſtems of falſe religion, the procedure is directly the reverſe. Men aſcribe to the beings whom they have deified, ſuch actions as they themſelves admire and celebrate. The qualities of the gods who are the objects of adoration, are copied from thoſe of the worſhippers who bow down before them; and thus many of the imperfections peculiar to men, have found admittance into heaven. By knowing the adventures and attributes of any falſe deity, we can pronounce, with ſome degree of certainty, what muſt have been the ſtate of ſociety and manners

[y] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94.

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when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It muſt have been in times of the greateſt licentiouſneſs, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the higheſt rank could be ſuppoſed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by paſſions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a diſgrace to human nature; it muſt have been when the earth was ſtill infeſted with deſtructive monſters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were expoſed to the depredations of lawleſs robbers, or the cruelty of ſavage oppreſſors, that the well known labours of Hercules, by which he was raiſed from earth to heaven, could have been neceſſary, or would have been deemed ſo highly meritorious. The ſame obſervation is applicable to the ancient mythology of India. Many of the adventures and exploits of the Indian deities are ſuited to the rudeſt ages of turbulence and rapine. It was to check diſorder, to redreſs wrongs, and to clear the earth of powerful oppreſſors, that Viſhnou, a divinity of the higheſt order, is ſaid to have become ſucceſſively incarnate, and to have appeared on earth in various forms [z].

[z] Voyage de Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 158, &c.

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III. The character and functions of thoſe deities which ſuperſtition created to itſelf as objects of its veneration, having everywhere a near reſemblance, the rites of their worſhip were everywhere extremely ſimilar. Accordingly, as deities were diſtinguiſhed, either by ferocity of character or licentiouſneſs of conduct, it is obvious what ſervices muſt have been deemed moſt acceptable to them. In order to conciliate the favour, or to appeaſe the wrath, of the former, faſts, mortifications, and penances, all rigid, and many of them excruciating to an extreme degree, were the means employed. Their altars were always bathed in blood, the moſt coſtly victims were offered, whole hecatombs were ſlaughtered, even human ſacrifices were not unknown, and were held to be the moſt powerful expiations. In order to gain the good-will of the deities of the latter deſcription, recourſe was had to inſtitutions of a very different kind, to ſplendid ceremonies, gay feſtivals, heightened by all the pleaſures of poetry, muſic, and dancing, but often terminating in ſcenes of indulgence too indecent to be deſcribed. Of both theſe, inſtances occur in the rites of Greek and Roman worſhip, which I need not mention to my learned readers [a]. In the Eaſt the ceremonial of ſuper-

[a] Strabo, lib. viii. p. 581. A. Lib. xii. p. 837. C.

ſtition

ſtition is nearly the ſame. The manners of the Indians, though diſtinguiſhed, from the time when they became known to the people of the Weſt, for mildneſs, ſeem, in a more remote period, to have been in a greater degree ſimilar to thoſe of other nations. Several of their deities were fierce and awful in their nature, and were repreſented in their temples under the moſt terrific forms. If we did not know the dominion of ſuperſtition over the human mind, we ſhould hardly believe, that a ritual of worſhip ſuited to the character of ſuch deities could have been eſtabliſhed among a gentle people. Every act of religion, performed in honour of ſome of their gods, ſeems to have been preſcribed by fear. Mortifications and penances, ſo rigorous, ſo painful, and ſo long continued, that we read the accounts of them with aſtoniſhment and horror, were multiplied. Repugnant as it is to the feelings of an Hindoo, to ſhed the blood of any creature that has life, many different animals, even the moſt uſeful, the horſe and the cow, were offered up as victims upon the altars of ſome of their gods[b]; and what is ſtill more ſtrange, the Pagodas of the Eaſt were polluted with human ſacrifices, as well as the temples of

[b] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 241. Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 251.

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the West [c]. But religious inſtitutions, and ceremonies of a leſs ſevere kind, were more adapted to the genius of a people, formed, by the extreme ſenſibility both of their mental and corporeal frame, to an immoderate love of pleaſure. In no part of the earth was a connection between the gratification of ſenſual deſire and the rites of public religion, diſplayed with more avowed indecency than in India. In every Pagoda there was a band of women ſet apart for the ſervice of the idol honoured there, and devoted from their early years to a life of pleaſure; for which the Brahmins prepared them by an education which added ſo many elegant accompliſhments to their natural charms, that what they gained by their profligacy, often brought no inconſiderable acceſſion to the revenue of the temple. In every function performed in the Pagodas, as well as in every public proceſſion, it is the office of theſe women to dance before the idol, and to ſing hymns in his praiſe; and it is difficult to ſay, whether they treſpaſs moſt againſt decency by the geſtures they exhibit, or by the verſes which they recite. The walls of the Pagoda are covered with paintings, in

[c] Hceto-pades, p. 185—322. Aſiat. Reſearches, vol. i. p. 265. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 207. Roger, p. 251.

a ſtile

a ſtile no leſs indelicate[d]; and in the innermoſt receſs of the temple, for it would be profane to call it the ſanctuary, is placed the *Lingam*, an emblem of productive power too groſs to be explained[e].

IV. How abſurd ſoever the articles of faith may be which ſuperſtition has adopted, or how unhallowed the rites which it preſcribes, the former are received in every age and country with unheſitating aſſent, by the great body of the people, and the latter obſerved with ſcrupulous exactneſs. In our reaſonings concerning religious opinions and practices which differ widely from our own, we are extremely apt to err. Having been inſtructed burſelves in the principles of a religion, worthy in every reſpect of that divine wiſdom by which they were dictated, we frequently expreſs wonder at the credulity of nations in embracing ſyſtems of belief which appear to us ſo directly repugnant to right reaſon, and ſometimes ſuſpect that tenets ſo wild and extravagant do not really gain credit with them. But experience may ſatisfy us, that

[d] Voyage de Gentil. vol. i. p. 244. 260. Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. lvii.

[e] Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 157. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 41. 175. Sketches, vol. i. p. 203. Hamilton's Trav. vol. i. p. 379.

neither

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neither our wonder nor ſuſpicions are well founded. No article of the public religion was called in queſtion by thoſe people of ancient Europe, with whoſe hiſtory we are beſt acquainted, and no practice which it enjoined appeared improper to them. On the other hand, every opinion that tended to diminiſh the reverence of men for the gods of their country, or to alienate them from their worſhip, excited among the Greeks and Romans that indignant zeal which is natural to every people attached to their religion, by a firm perſuaſion of its truth. The attachment of the Indians, both in ancient and modern times, to the tenets and rites of their anceſtors, has been, if poſſible, ſtill greater. In no country, of which we have any account, were precautions taken with ſo much ſolicitude, to place the great body of the people beyond the reach of any temptation to doubt or diſbelief. They not only were prevented, (as I have already obſerved the great bulk of mankind muſt always be in every country,) from entering upon any ſpeculative inquiry, by the various occupations of active and laborious life, but any attempt to extend the ſphere of their knowledge was expreſsly prohibited. If one of the Sooder caſt, by far the moſt numerous of the four into which the whole nation was divided, preſumed to read any portion of the

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ſacred books, in which all the ſcience known in India is contained, he was ſeverely puniſhed; if he ventured to get it by heart, he was put to death[f]. To aſpire after any higher degree of knowledge than the Brahmins have been pleaſed to teach, would be deemed not only preſumption but impiety. Even the higher Caſts depended entirely for inſtruction on the Brahmins, and could acquire no portion of ſcience but what they deigned to communicate. By means of this, a devout reverence was univerſally maintained for thoſe inſtitutions which were conſidered as ſacred; and, though the faith of the Hindoos has been often tried by ſevere perſecutions, excited by the bigotry of their Mahomedan conquerors, no people ever adhered with greater fidelity to the tenets and rites of their anceſtors[g].

V. We may obſerve, that when ſcience and philoſophy are diffuſed through any country, the ſyſtem of ſuperſtition is ſubjected to a ſcrutiny from which it was formerly exempt, and opinions ſpread which imperceptibly diminiſh its influence over the minds of men. A free and full examination is always favourable to

[f] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 7.
[g] Orme's Fragment, p. 102. Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 194.

truth,

truth, but fatal to error. What is received with implicit faith in ages of darkneſs, will excite contempt or indignation in an enlightened period. The hiſtory of religion in Greece and Italy, the only countries of Europe which, in ancient times, were diſtinguiſhed for their attainments in ſcience, confirms the truth of this obſervation. As ſoon as ſcience made ſuch progreſs in Greece as rendered men capable of diſcerning the wiſdom, the foreſight, and the goodneſs diſplayed in creating, preſerving, and governing the world, they muſt have perceived, that the characters of the divinities which were propoſed as the objects of adoration in their temples, could not entitle them to be conſidered as the preſiding powers in nature. A poet might addreſs Jupiter as the father of gods and men, who governed both by eternal laws; but, to a philoſopher, the ſon of Saturn, the ſtory of whoſe life is a ſeries of violent and licentious deeds, which would render any man odious or deſpicable, muſt have appeared altogether unworthy of that ſtation. The nature of the religious ſervice celebrated in their temples muſt have been no leſs offenſive to an enlightened mind, than the character of the deities in honour of whom it was performed. Inſtead of inſtitutions, tending to reclaim men from vice, to form or to ſtrengthen habits of virtue, or to elevate the mind

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mind to a ſenſe of its proper dignity, ſuperſtition either occupied its votaries in frivolous unmeaning ceremonies, or preſcribed rites, which operated, with fatal influence, in inflaming the paſſions and corrupting the heart.

It is with timidity, however, and caution, that men venture to attack the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, or to impugn opinions which have been long held ſacred. At firſt, ſome philoſophers endeavoured, by allegorical interpretations and refined comments, to explain the popular mythology, as if it had been a deſcription of the powers of nature, and of the various events and revolutions which take place in the ſyſtem of the material world, and endeavoured, by this expedient, to palliate many of its abſurdities. By degrees, bolder theories concerning religion were admitted into the ſchools of ſcience. Philoſophers of enlarged views, ſenſible of the impiety of the popular ſuperſtition, formed ideas concerning the perfections of one Supreme Being, the Creator and Ruler of the univerſe, as juſt and rational as have ever been attained by the unaſſiſted powers of the human mind.

If from Europe we now turn to Aſia, we ſhall find, that the obſervation which I have

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made upon the hiſtory of falſe religion holds equally true there. In India as well as in Greece, it was by cultivating ſcience that men were firſt led to examine and to entertain doubts with reſpect to the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of ſuperſtition; and when we conſider the great difference between the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution (if I may uſe that expreſſion) of the two countries, we are apt to imagine that the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem lay more open to examination in the latter than in the former. In Greece there was not any diſtinct race or order of men ſet apart for performing the functions of religion, or to ſerve as hereditary and intereſted guardians of its tenets and inſtitutions. But in India the Brahmins were born the miniſters of religion, and they had an excluſive right of preſiding in all the numerous rites of worſhip which ſuperſtition preſcribed as neceſſary to avert the wrath of Heaven, or to render it propitious. Theſe diſtinctions and privileges ſecured to them a wonderful aſcendant over their countrymen; and every conſideration that can influence the human mind, the honour, the intereſt, the power of their order, called upon them to ſupport the tenets, and to maintain the inſtitutions and rites, with which the preſervation of this aſcendant was ſo intimately connected.

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BUT as the moſt eminent perſons of the Caſt devoted their lives to the cultivation of ſcience, the progreſs which they made in all the branches of it (of which I have given ſome account) was great, and enabled them to form ſuch a juſt idea of the ſyſtem of nature, and of the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs diſplayed in the formation and government of it, as elevated their minds above the popular ſuperſtition, and led them to acknowledge and reverence one Supreme Being, "the Creator of all things (to "uſe their own expreſſions), and from whom "all things proceed [h]."

THIS is the idea which Abul Fazel, who examined the opinions of the Brahmins with the greateſt attention and candour, gives of their theology. "They all," ſays he, "believe in "the unity of the Godhead, and although they "hold images in high veneration, it is only "becauſe they repreſent celeſtial beings, and "prevent the thoughts of thoſe who worſhip "them from wandering [i]." The ſentiments of the moſt intelligent Europeans who have viſited India, coincide perfectly with his, in reſpect to this point. The accounts which Mr. Bernier received from the Pundits of Benares,

[h] Baghwat-Geeta, p. 84. [i] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 3.

both

both of their external worſhip, and of one Sovereign Lord being the ſole object of their devotion, is preciſely the ſame with that given by Abul Fazel [k]. Mr. Wilkins, better qualified perhaps than any European ever was to judge with reſpect to this ſubject, repreſents the learned Brahmins of the preſent times as Theiſts, believers in the unity of God [l]. Of the ſame opinion is M. Sonnerat, who reſided in India ſeven years, in order to inquire into the manners, ſciences, and religion of the Hindoos [m]. The Pundits, who tranſlated the Code of Gentoo Laws, declare, "that it was the Supreme Being, "who, by his power, formed all creatures of the "animal, vegetable, and material world, from "the four elements of fire, water, air, and earth, "to be an ornament to the magazine of creation; "and whoſe comprehenſive benevolence ſelected "man, the center of knowledge, to have do-"minion and authority over the reſt; and, "having beſtowed upon this favourite object "judgment and underſtanding, gave him ſupre-"macy over the corners of the world [n]."

NOR are theſe to be regarded as refined ſentiments of later times. The Brahmins being

[k] Voyage, tom. ii. p. 159.
[l] Preface to Baghvat-Geeta, p. 24.
[m] Voyage, tom. i. p. 198. [n] Prelim. Diſcourſ. p. lxxiii.

conſidered

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considered by the Mahomedan conquerors of India as the guardians of the national religion, have been so studiously depressed by their fanatical zeal, that the modern members of that order are as far inferior to their ancestors in science as in power. It is from the writings of their ancient Pundits that they derive the most liberal sentiments which they entertain at present, and the wisdom for which they are now celebrated has been transmitted to them from ages very remote.

THAT this assertion is well founded we are enabled to pronounce with certainty, as the most profound mysteries of Hindoo theology, concealed with the greatest care from the body of the people, have been unveiled by the translations from the Sanskreet language lately published. The principal design of the Baghvat-Geeta, an episode in the Mahabarat, a poem of the highest antiquity, and of the greatest authority in India, seems to have been to establish the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and from a just view of the divine nature, to deduce an idea of what worship will be most acceptable to a perfect Being. In it, amidst much obscure metaphysical discussion, some ornaments of fancy unsuited to our taste, and some thoughts elevated to a tract of sublimity into which, from

our habits of reasoning and judging, we will find it difficult to follow them °, we find descriptions of the Supreme Being entitled to equal praise with those of the Greek philosophers which I have celebrated. Of these I shall now produce one to which I formerly alluded, and refer my readers for others to the work itself: "O mighty Being," says Arjoon, "who art "the prime Creator, eternal God of Gods, the "World's Mansion! Thou art the incor-"ruptible Being, distinct from all things tran-"sient. Thou art before all Gods, the ancient "*Poorooſh* [i. e. vital soul], and the Supreme "Supporter of the universe. Thou knowest "all things, and art worthy to be known; thou "art the Supreme Mansion, and by thee, O "infinite Form, the universe was spread "abroad! reverence be unto thee before and "behind; reverence be unto thee on all sides, "O thou who art all in all! Infinite is thy "power and thy glory.—Thou art the father "of all things, animate and inanimate. Thou "art the wise instructor of the whole, worthy "to be adored. There is none like unto thee; "where, then, in the three worlds, is there one "above thee? Wherefore I bow down, and "with my body prostrate upon the ground, crave

° Mr. Hastings's Letter, prefixed to the Bagvat-Geeta, p. 7.

"thy mercy, Lord! worthy to be adored;
"for thou shouldest bear with me, even as a
"father with his son, a friend with his friend,
"a lover with his beloved[p]." A description of the Supreme Being is given in one of the sacred books of the Hindoos, from which it is evident what were the general sentiments of the learned Brahmins concerning the divine nature and perfections: "As God is immaterial,
"he is above all conception; as he is invisible,
"he can have no form; but from what we
"behold of his works, we may conclude, that
"he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing all things,
"and present everywhere[q]."

To men capable of forming such ideas of the Deity, the public service in the Pagodas must have appeared to be an idolatrous worship of images, by a superstitious multiplication of frivolous or immoral rites; and they must have seen that it was only by sanctity of heart, and purity of manners, men could hope to gain the approbation of a Being perfect in goodness. This truth Veias labours to inculcate in the Mahabarat, but with the prudent reserve and artful precautions natural to a Brahmin, studious neither to offend his countrymen, nor to diminish

[p] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94, 95. [q] Dow's Differt. p. xl.

the influence of his own order. His ideas concerning the mode of worſhipping the Deity, are explained in many ſtriking paſſages of the poem; but unwilling to multiply quotations, I ſatisfy myſelf with referring to them [r].

WHEN we recollect how ſlowly the mind of man opens to abſtract ideas, and how difficult (according to an obſervation in the Mahabarat) an inviſible path is to corporeal beings, it is evident that the Hindoos muſt have attained an high degree of improvement before their ſentiments roſe ſo far ſuperior to the popular ſuperſtition of their country. The different ſtates of Greece had ſubſiſted long, and had made conſiderable progreſs in refinement, before the errors of falſe religion began to be detected. It was not until the age of Socrates, and in the ſchools of philoſophy eſtabliſhed by his diſciples, that principles adverſe to the tenets of the popular ſuperſtition were much propagated.

A LONGER period of time elapſed before the Romans, a nation of warriors and ſtateſmen, were enlightened by ſcience, or ventured upon any free diſquiſition concerning the objects of

[r] Baghvat Geeta, p. 55. 67. 75. 97. 119.

the

the rites of worſhip authorized by their anceſtors. But in India the happy effects of progreſs in ſcience were much more early conſpicuous. Without adopting the wild computations of Indian chronology, according to which, the Mahabarat was compoſed above four thouſand years ago, we muſt allow, that it is a work of very great antiquity, and the author of it diſcovers an acquaintance with the principles of theology, of morals, and of metaphyſics, more juſt and rational, than ſeems to have been attained, at that period, by any nation whoſe hiſtory is known.

But ſo unable are the limited powers of the human mind to form an adequate idea of the perfections and operations of the Supreme Being, that in all the theories concerning them, of the moſt eminent philoſophers in the moſt enlightened nations, we find a lamentable mixture of ignorance and error. From theſe the Brahmins were not more exempt than the ſages of other countries. As they held that the ſyſtem of nature was not only originally arranged by the power and wiſdom of God, but that every event which happened was brought about by his immediate interpoſition, and as they could not comprehend how a being could act in any place unleſs where it was preſent, they ſuppoſed the Deity to be a vivifying principle diffuſed

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through the whole creation, an univerſal ſoul that animated each part of it[s]. Every intelligent nature, particularly the ſouls of men, they conceived to be portions ſeparated from this great ſpirit[t], to which, after fulfilling their deſtiny on earth, and attaining a proper degree of purity, they would be again re-united. In order to efface the ſtains with which a ſoul, during its reſidence on earth, has been defiled, by the indulgence of ſenſual and corrupt appetites, they taught that it muſt paſs, in a long ſucceſſion of tranſmigrations, through the bodies of different animals, until, by what it ſuffers and what it learns in the various forms of its exiſtence, it ſhall be ſo thoroughly refined from all pollution as to be rendered meet for being abſorbed into the divine eſſence, and returns like a drop into that unbounded ocean from which it originally iſſued[u]. Theſe doctrines of the Brahmins, concerning the Deity, as the ſoul which pervades all nature, giving activity and vigour to every part of it, as well as the final re-union of all intelligent creatures to their primæval ſource, coincide perfectly with the tenets of the Stoical

[s] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 65. 78. 85. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 163.

[t] Dow's Diſſert. p. xliii.

[u] Voy. de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 192. 200. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 39. 115. Dow's Diſſert. p. xliii.

School,

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School. It is remarkable, that after having obſerved a near reſemblance in the moſt ſublime ſentiments of their moral doctrine, we ſhould likewiſe diſcover ſuch a ſimilarity in the errors of their theological ſpeculations [x].

THE human mind, however, when deſtitute of ſuperior guidance, is apt to fall into a practical error with reſpect to religion, of a tendency ſtill more dangerous. When philoſophers, by their attainments in ſcience, began to acquire ſuch juſt ideas of the nature and perfections of the Supreme Being, as convinced them that the popular ſyſtem of ſuperſtition was not only abſurd but impious, they were fully aware of all the danger which might ariſe from communicating what they had diſcovered to the people, incapable of comprehending the force of thoſe reaſons which had ſwayed with them, and ſo zealouſly attached to eſtabliſhed opinions, as to revolt againſt any attempt to detect their falſehood. Inſtead, therefore, of allowing any ray of that knowledge which illuminated their own minds to reach them, they formed a theory to juſtify their own conduct, and to prevent the darkneſs of that cloud which hung over the minds of their fellow-men from being ever diſ-

[x] Lipſij Phyſiol. Stoicor. lib. i. diſſert. viii. xxi. Seneca, Antoninus, Epictetus, paſſim.

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pelled. The vulgar and unlearned, they contended, had no right to truth. Doomed by their condition to remain in ignorance, they were to be kept in order by deluſion, and allured to do what is right, or deterred from venturing upon what is wrong, by the hope of thoſe imaginary rewards which ſuperſtition promiſes, and the dread of thoſe puniſhments which it threatens. In confirmation of this, I might quote the doctrine of moſt of the philoſophic ſects, and produce the words of almoſt every eminent Greek and Roman writer. It will be ſufficient, however, to lay before my readers a remarkable paſſage in Strabo, to whom I have been ſo often indebted in the courſe of my reſearches, and who was no leſs qualified to judge with reſpect to the political opinions of his contemporaries, than to deſcribe the countries which they inhabited. "What is marvellous in fable, is em-
"ployed," ſays he, "ſometimes to pleaſe, and
"ſometimes to inſpire terror, and both theſe
"are of uſe, not only with children, but with
"perſons of mature age. To children we pro-
"poſe delightful fictions, in order to encourage
"them to act well, and ſuch as are terrible
"in order to reſtrain them from evil. Thus
"when men are united in ſociety, they are in-
"cited to what is laudable, by hearing the poets
"celebrate the ſplendid actions of fabulous
"ſtory,

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"ſtory, ſuch as the labours of Hercules and "Theſeus, in reward for which they are now "honoured as divinities, or by beholding their "illuſtrious deeds exhibited to public view in "painting and ſculpture. On the other hand, "they are deterred from vice, when the puniſh-"ments inflicted by the gods upon evil-doers "are related, and threats are denounced againſt "them in awful words, or repreſented by fright-"ful figures, and when men believe that theſe "threats have been really executed upon the "guilty. For it is impoſſible to conduct wo-"men and the groſs multitude, and to render "them holy, pious, and upright, by the pre-"cepts of reaſon and philoſophy; ſuperſtition, "or the fear of the gods, muſt be called in "aid, the influence of which is founded on "fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of "Jupiter, the ægis of Minerva, the trident of "Neptune, the torches and ſnakes of the furies, "the ſpears of the gods, adorned with ivy, and "the whole ancient theology, are all fables, "which the legiſlators who formed the political "conſtitution of ſtates employ as bugbears to "overawe the credulous and ſimple [y]."

THESE ideas of the philoſophers of Europe were preciſely the ſame which the Brahmins

[y] Strabo, lib. i. p. 36. B.

had

had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with reſpect to the great body of the people. As their order had an excluſive right to read the ſacred books, to cultivate and to teach ſcience, they could more effectually prevent all who were not members of it from acquiring any portion of information beyond what they were pleaſed to impart. When the free circulation of knowledge is not circumſcribed by ſuch reſtrictions, the whole community derives benefit from every new acquiſition in ſcience, the influence of which, both upon ſentiment and conduct, extends inſenſibly from the few to the many, from the learned to the ignorant. But wherever the dominion of falſe religion is completely eſtabliſhed, the body of the people gain nothing by the greateſt improvements in knowledge. Their philoſophers conceal from them, with the utmoſt ſolicitude, the truths which they have diſcovered, and labour to ſupport that fabric of ſuperſtition which it was their duty to have overturned. They not only enjoin others to reſpect the religious rites preſcribed by the laws of their country, but conform to them in their own practice, and, with every external appearance of reverence and devotion, bow down before the altars of deities, who muſt inwardly be the objects of their contempt. Inſtead of reſembling the teachers of true religion in the benevolent ardour

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ardour with which they have always communicated to their fellow-men the knowledge of thoſe important truths, with which their own minds were enlightened and rendered happy, the ſages of Greece, and the Brahmins of India, carried on with ſtudied artifice, a ſcheme of deceit, and, according to an emphatic expreſſion of an inſpired writer, they *detained* the truth in unrighteouſneſs[z]. They knew and approved what was true, but among the reſt of mankind they laboured to ſupport and to perpetuate what is falſe.

THUS I have gone through all the particulars which I originally propoſed to examine, and have endeavoured to diſcover the ſtate of the inhabitants of India with reſpect to each of them. If I had aimed at nothing elſe than to deſcribe the civil policy, the arts, the ſciences, and religious inſtitutions of one of the moſt ancient and moſt numerous race of men, that alone would have led me into inquiries and diſcuſſions both curious and inſtructive. I own, however, that I have all along kept in view an object more intereſting, as well as of greater importance, and entertain hopes, that if the account which I have given of the early and high civi-

[z] Rom. i. 18.

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lization of India, and of the wonderful progreſs of its inhabitants in elegant arts and uſeful ſcience, ſhall be received as juſt and well eſtabliſhed, it may have ſome influence upon the behaviour of Europeans towards that people. Unfortunately for the human ſpecies, in whatever quarter of the globe the people of Europe have acquired dominion, they have found the inhabitants not only in a ſtate of ſociety and improvement far inferior to their own, but different in their complexion, and in all their habits of life. Men in every ſtage of their career are ſo ſatisfied with the progreſs made by the community of which they are members, that it becomes to them a ſtandard of perfection, and they are apt to regard people, whoſe condition is not ſimilar, with contempt, and even averſion. In Africa and America, the diſſimilitude is ſo conſpicuous, that, in the pride of their ſuperiority, Europeans thought themſelves entitled to reduce the natives of the former to ſlavery, and to exterminate thoſe of the latter. Even in India, though far advanced beyond the two other quarters of the globe in improvement, the colour of the inhabitants, their effeminate appearance, their unwarlike ſpirit, the wild extravagance of their religious tenets and ceremonies, and many other circumſtances, confirmed Europeans in ſuch an opinion of their own pre-

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eminence, that they have always viewed and treated them as an inferior race of men. Happy would it be if any of the four European nations, who have, ſucceſſively, acquired extenſive territories and power in India, could altogether vindicate itſelf from having acted in this manner. Nothing, however, can have a more direct and powerful tendency to inſpire Europeans, proud of their own ſuperior attainments in policy, ſcience, and arts, with proper ſentiments concerning the people of India, and to teach them a due regard for their natural rights as men, than their being accuſtomed, not only to conſider the Hindoos of the preſent times as a knowing and ingenious race of men, but to view them as deſcended from anceſtors who had attained to a very high degree of improvement, many ages before the leaſt ſtep towards civilization had been taken in any part of Europe. It was by an impartial and candid inquiry into their manners, that the Emperor Akber was led to conſider the Hindoos as no leſs entitled to protection and favour than his other ſubjects, and to govern them with ſuch equity and mildneſs, as to merit from a grateful people the honourable appellation of "The "Guardian of Mankind." It was from a thorough knowledge of their character and acquirements, that his Vizier Abul Fazel, with a liberality of mind

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mind unexampled among Mahomedans, pronounces an high encomium on the virtues of the Hindoos, both as individuals and as members of ſociety, and celebrates their attainments in arts and ſciences of every kind [a]. If I might preſume to hope that the deſcription which I have given of the manners and inſtitutions of the people of India could contribute in the ſmalleſt degree, and with the moſt remote influence, to render their character more reſpectable, and their condition more happy, I ſhall cloſe my literary labours with the ſatisfaction of thinking that I have not lived or written in vain.

[a] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 2. 81. 95.

NOTES

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NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTE I. Sect. I. p. 8.

CREDULITY and ſcepticiſm are two oppoſite extremes into which men are apt to run, in examining the events which are ſaid to have happened in the early ages of antiquity. Without incurring any ſuſpicion of a propenſity to the latter of theſe, I may be allowed to entertain doubts concerning the expedition of Seſoſtris into India, and his conqueſt of that country. —— 1. Few facts in ancient hiſtory ſeem to be better eſtabliſhed, than that of the early averſion of the Egyptians to a ſea-faring life. Even the power of deſpotiſm cannot at once change the ideas and manners of a nation, eſpecially when they have been confirmed by long habit, and rendered ſacred by the ſanction of religion. That Seſoſtris, in the courſe of a few years, ſhould have ſo entirely overcome the prejudices of a ſuperſtitious people, as to be able to fit out four hundred ſhips of force

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in the Arabian Gulf, beſides another fleet which he had in the Mediterranean, appears to be extremely improbable. Armaments of ſuch magnitude would require the utmoſt efforts of a great and long eſtabliſhed maritime power.——2. It is remarkable that Herodotus, who inquired with the moſt perſevering diligence into the ancient hiſtory of Egypt, and who received all the information concerning it which the prieſts of Memphis, Heliopolis, and Thebes, could communicate, Herodot. edit. Weſſelingij, lib. ii. c. 3., although he relates the hiſtory of Seſoſtris at ſome length, does not mention his conqueſt of India. Lib. ii. c. 102, &c. That tale, it is probable, was invented in the period between the age of Herodotus and that of Diodorus Siculus, from whom we receive a particular detail of the Indian expedition of Seſoſtris. His account reſts entirely upon the authority of the Egyptian prieſts; and Diodorus himſelf not only gives it as his general opinion, "that many things "which they related, flowed rather from a deſire "to promote the honour of their country, than from "attention to truth," lib. i. p. 34. edit. Weſſelingij, Amſt. 1746; but takes particular notice that the Egyptian prieſts, as well as the Greek writers, differ widely from one another in the accounts which they give of the actions of Seſoſtris, lib. i. p. 60.——3. Though Diodorus aſſerts, that in relating the hiſtory of Seſoſtris he had ſtudied to ſelect what appeared to him moſt probable, and moſt agreeable to the monuments of that monarch ſtill remaining in Egypt, he has admitted into his narrative many marvellous circumſtances, which render the whole extremely ſuſpicious. The father of Seſoſtris, as he relates, collected all the male

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male children who were born in Egypt on the ſame day with his ſon, in order that they might be educated, together with him, conformable to a mode which he preſcribed, with a view of preparing them as proper inſtruments to carry into execution the great undertakings for which he deſtined Seſoſtris. Accordingly, when Seſoſtris ſet out upon his Indian expedition, which, from circumſtances mentioned by Diodorus, muſt have been about the fortieth year of his age, one thouſand ſeven hundred of his youthful aſſociates are ſaid to have been ſtill alive, and were entruſted with high command in his army. But if we apply to the examination of this ſtory the certain principles of political arithmetic, it is evident, that if one thouſand ſeven hundred of the male children born on the ſame day with Seſoſtris were alive when his great expedition commenced, the number of children born in Egypt on each day of the year muſt have been at leaſt ten thouſand, and the population of the kingdom muſt have exceeded ſixty millions; Goguet l'Origine des Loix, des Arts, &c. tom. ii. p. 12, &c. a number far beyond the bounds of credibility, in a kingdom which, from the accurate calculations of M.D'Anville, Memoire ſur l'Egypte Anc. et Moderne, p. 23, &c. does not contain more than two thouſand one hundred ſquare leagues of habitable country. Decline and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. v. p. 348. Another marvellous particular is the deſcription of a ſhip of cedar, four hundred and ninety feet in length, covered on the outſide with gold, and on the inſide with ſilver, which Seſoſtris conſecrated to the deity who was the chief object of worſhip at Thebes. Lib. i. p. 67. Such

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too is the account he gives of the Egyptian army, in which, beſide ſix hundred thouſand infantry, and twenty-four thouſand cavalry, there were twenty-ſeven thouſand armed chariots. Ibid. p. 64.—4. Theſe and other particulars appeared ſo far to exceed the bounds of probability, that the ſound underſtanding of Strabo the geographer rejected, without heſitation, the accounts of the Indian expedition of Seſoſtris; and he not only aſſerts, in the moſt explicit terms, that this monarch never entered India, lib. xv. p. 1007. C. edit. Caſaub. Amſt. 1707.; but he ranks what has been related concerning his operations in that country, with the fabulous exploits of Bacchus and Hercules, p. 1007. D. 1009. B. The philoſophical Hiſtorian of Alexander the Great ſeems to have entertained the ſame ſentiments with reſpect to the exploits of Seſoſtris in India. Hiſt. Ind. c. 5. Arrian, Exped. Alex. edit. Gronov. L. Bat. 1704.—What ſlender information concerning India, or its inhabitants, Herodotus had received, ſeems to have been derived, not from the Egyptians, but from the Perſians, lib. iii. c. 105, which renders it probable, that in his time there was little intercourſe between Egypt and India. If Reland be well founded in his opinion, that many of the words mentioned by ancient authors as Indian are really Perſian, we may conclude that there was an early intercourſe between Perſia and India, of which hardly any trace remains in hiſtory. Reland. Diſſert. de Veteri Lingua Indic. ap. Diſſert. Miſcel. vol. i. p. 209.

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NOTE II. Sect. I. p. 10.

When we conſider the extent and effects of the Phenician commerce, the ſcanty information concerning it which we receive from ancient writers muſt, on a firſt view, appear ſurpriſing. But when we recollect that all the Greek Hiſtorians, (Herodotus excepted,) who give any account of the Phenicians, publiſhed their works long after the deſtruction of Tyre by Alexander the Great, we will ceaſe to wonder at their not having entered into minute details with reſpect to a trade which was then removed to new ſeats, and carried on in other channels. But the power and opulence of Tyre, in the proſperous age of its commerce, muſt have attracted general attention. In the prophecies of Ezekiel, who flouriſhed two hundred and ſixty years before the fall of Tyre, there is the moſt particular account of the nature and variety of its commercial tranſactions that is to be found in any ancient writer, and which conveys, at the ſame time, a magnificent idea of the extenſive power of that ſtate. Ch. xxvi, xxvii, xxviii.

NOTE III. Sect. I. p. 14.

The account given of the revenue of the Perſian monarchy by Herodotus is curious, and ſeems to have been copied from ſome public record, which had been communicated to him. According to it, the Perſian empire was divided into twenty ſatrapys, or governments.

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ments. The tribute levied from each is ſpecified, amounting in all to 14,560 Eubœan talents, which Dr. Arbuthnot reckons to be equal to 2,807,437*l.* ſterling money; a ſum extremely ſmall for the revenue of the Great King, and which ill accords with many facts concerning the riches, magnificence, and luxury of the Eaſt, that occur in ancient authors.

NOTE IV. SECT. I. p. 18.

MAJOR RENNELL, in the ſecond edition of his Memoir, has traced, from very imperfect materials, the routes by which Alexander, Tamerlane, and Nadir Shah penetrated into India, with a degree of accuracy which does honour to his diſcernment, and diſplays the ſuperiority of his knowledge in the ancient and modern geography of that country. His reſearches he has illuſtrated by an additional map. To theſe I muſt refer my readers. Nor are they to conſider his laborious inveſtigation merely as an object of curioſity; the geography of that fertile and extenſive region of India, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Panjab*, with which we are at preſent little acquainted, may ſoon become very intereſting. If, on the one hand, that firm foundation on which the Britiſh empire in India ſeems to be eſtabliſhed, by the ſucceſsful termination of the late war, remains unſhaken;—if, on the other hand, the Seiks, a confederacy of ſeveral independent ſtates, ſhall continue to extend their dominions with the ſame rapidity that they have advanced ſince the beginning of the current century;—it is highly probable that the enterprizing commercial ſpirit of the

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one people, and the martial ardour of the other, who ſtill retain the activity and ardour natural to men in the early ſtages of ſocial union, may give riſe to events of the greateſt moment. The frontiers of the two ſtates are approaching gradually nearer and nearer to each other, the territories of the Seiks having reached to the weſtern bank of the river Jumnah, while thoſe of the Nabob of Oude ſtretch alone its eaſtern bank. This Nabob, the ally or tributary of the Eaſt India Company, is ſupported by a brigade of the Bengal army, conſtantly ſtationed on his weſtern frontier. Ren. Mem. Introd. p. cxvi. In a poſition ſo contiguous, rivalry for power, interference of intereſt, and innumerable other cauſes of jealouſy and diſcord, can hardly fail of terminating, ſooner or later, in open hoſtility. The Seiks poſſeſs the whole Soubah of Lahore, the principal part of Moultan, and the weſtern part of Delhi. The dimenſions of this tract are about 400 Britiſh miles from N. W. to S. E. varying in breadth from 320 to 150 miles. Their capital city is Lahore. Little is known concerning their government and political maxims; but they are repreſented as mild. In their mode of making war, they are unqueſtionably ſavage and cruel. Their army conſiſts almoſt entirely of horſe; of which they can bring at leaſt 100,000 into the field. Maj. Ren. Mem. 2d edit. Introd. p. cxxi, cxxii. and p. 365. See alſo Mr. Craufurd's Sketches, 2d edit. vol. ii. p. 263, &c.

NOTE V. Sect. I. p. 20.

It is ſurpriſing that Alexander did not receive, in the provinces contiguous to India, ſuch an account of

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the periodical rains in that country, as to ſhew him the impropriety of carrying on military operations there while theſe continued. His expedition into India commenced towards the end of Spring, Arrian, lib. iv. c. 22., when the rains were already begun in the mountains from which all the rivers in the Panjab flow, and of courſe they muſt have been conſiderably ſwelled before he arrived on their banks. Rennell, p. 268.—He paſſed the Hydaſpes at Midſummer, about the height of the rainy ſeaſon. In a country through which ſo many large rivers run, an army on ſervice at this time of the year muſt have ſuffered greatly. An accurate deſcription of the nature of the rains and inundations in this part of India, is given by Arrian, lib. v. c. 9.; and one ſtill fuller may be found in Strabo, lib. xv. 1013.—It was of what they ſuffered by theſe that Alexander's ſoldiers complained, Strabo, lib. xv. 1021. D.; and not without reaſon, as it had rained inceſſantly during ſeventy days, Diod. Sicul. xvii. c. 94.—A circumſtance which marks the accuracy with which Alexander's officers had attended to every thing in that part of India, deſerves notice. Ariſtobulus, in his Journal, which I have mentioned, obſerves that, though heavy rains fell in the mountains, and in the country near to them, in the plains below not ſo much as a ſhower fell. Strabo, liv. xv. 1013. B. 1015. B. Major Rennell was informed by a perſon of character, who had reſided in this diſtrict of India, which is now ſeldom viſited by Europeans, that during great part of the S. W. monſoon, or at leaſt in the months of July, Auguſt, and part of September, which is the rainy ſeaſon in moſt other parts of India, the atmoſphere in the Delta of the Indus

Indus is generally clouded, but no rain falls, except very near the ſea. Indeed, very few ſhowers fall during the whole ſeaſon. Captain Hamilton relates, that when he viſited Tatta, no rain had fallen for three years before. Memoirs, p. 288.—Tamerlane, who, by the vicinity of the ſeat of his government to India, had the means of being well informed concerning the nature of the country, avoided the error of Alexander, and made his Indian campaign during the dry ſeaſon. As Nadir Shah, both when he invaded India, A. D. 1738, and in his return next year, marched through the ſame countries with Alexander, and nearly in the ſame line of direction, nothing can give a more ſtriking idea of the perſevering ardour of the Macedonian conqueror, than the deſcription of the difficulties which Nadir Shah had to ſurmount, and the hardſhips which his army endured. Though poſſeſſed of abſolute power and immenſe wealth, and diſtinguiſhed no leſs by great talents than long experience in the conduct of war, he had the mortification to loſe a great part of his troops in croſſing the rivers of the Panjab, in penetrating through the mountains to the north of India, and in conflicts with the fierce natives inhabiting the countries which ſtretch from the banks of the Oxus to the frontiers of Perſia. An intereſting account of his retreat and ſufferings is given in the Memoirs of Khojeh Abdulkurreen, a Caſhmerian of diſtinction, who ſerved in his army.

NOTE VI. Sect. I. p. 22.

That a fleet ſo numerous ſhould have been collected in ſuch a ſhort time, is apt to appear, at firſt ſight,

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incredible. Arrian, however, assures us, that in specifying this number, he followed Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, whose authority he considered to be of the greatest weight, lib. vi. c. 3. But as the Panjab country is full of navigable rivers, on which all the intercourse among the natives was carried on, it abounded with vessels ready constructed to the conqueror's hands, so that he might easily collect that number. If we could give credit to the account of the invasion of India by Semiramis, no fewer than four thousand vessels were assembled in the Indus to oppose her fleet. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. c. 74.—It is remarkable that when Mahmoud of Gaznah invaded India, a fleet was collected on the Indus to oppose him, consisting of the same number of vessels. We learn from the Ayeen Akbery, that the inhabitants of this part of India still continue to carry on all their communication with each other by water; the inhabitants of the Circar of Tatta alone have not less than forty thousand vessels of various constructions. Vol. ii. p. 143.

NOTE VII. Sect. I. p. 24.

All these particulars are taken from the Indian History of Arrian, a work different from that already mentioned, and one of the most curious treatises transmitted to us from antiquity. The first part of it consists of extracts from the account given by Nearchus of the climate and soil of India, and the manners of the natives. The second contains that officer's journal of his voyage from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Persian Gulf. The perusal of it gives

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gives rise to several observations.—1. It is remarkable that neither Nearchus, nor Ptolemy, nor Aristobulus, nor even Arrian, once mention the voyage of Scylax. This could not proceed from their being unacquainted with it, for Herodotus was a favourite author in the hands of every Greek who had any pretensions to literature. It was probably occasioned by the reasons which they had to distrust the veracity of Scylax, of which I have already taken notice. Accordingly, in a speech which Arrian puts into the mouth of Alexander, he asserts that, except Bacchus, he was the first who had passed the Indus; which implies, that he disbelieved what is related concerning Scylax, and was not acquainted with what Darius Hystaspes is said to have done in order to subject that part of India to the Persian crown. Arrian, vii. c. 10. This opinion is confirmed by Megasthenes, who resided a considerable time in India. He asserts that, except Bacchus and Hercules, (to whose fabulous expeditions Strabo is astonished that he should have given any credit, lib. xv. p. 1007. D.) Alexander was the first who had invaded India; Arrian, Hist. Indic. c. 5. We are informed by Arrian, that the Assacani, and other people who possessed that country, which is now called the kingdom of Candahar, paid tribute, first to the Assyrians, and afterwards to the Medes and Persians; Hist. Indic. c. 1. As all the fertile provinces on the north-west of the Indus were anciently reckoned to be part of India, it is probable that what was levied from them is the sum mentioned in the tribute-roll, from which Herodotus drew his account of the annual revenue of the Persian empire, and that none of the provinces to the south of the Indus were ever

ever ſubject to the kings of Perſia.——2. This voyage of Nearchus affords ſome ſtriking inſtances of the imperfect knowledge which the ancients had of any navigation different from that to which they were accuſtomed in the Mediterranean. Though the enterpriſing genius and enlarged views of Alexander prompted him to attempt opening an intercourſe by ſea between India and his Perſian dominions, yet both he and Nearchus knew ſo little of the ocean which they wiſhed to explore, as to be apprehenſive that it might be found impoſſible to navigate it, on account of impervious ſtraits, or other obſtacles. Hiſt. Indic. c. 20. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 9. When the fleet arrived near the mouth of the Indus, the aſtoniſhment excited by the extraordinary flow and ebb of tide in the Indian ocean, a phenomenon (according to Arrian) with which Alexander and his ſoldiers were unacquainted, lib. vi. c. 19. is another proof of their ignorance in maritime ſcience. Nor is there any reaſon to be ſurpriſed at their aſtoniſhment, as the tides are hardly perceptible in the Mediterranean, beyond which the knowledge of the Greeks and Macedonians did not extend. For the ſame reaſon, when the Romans carried their victorious arms into the countries ſituated on the Atlantic Ocean, or on the ſeas that communicate with it, this new phenomenon of the tides was an object of wonder and terror to them. Cæſar deſcribes the amazement of his ſoldiers at a ſpring-tide, which greatly damaged the fleet with which he invaded Britain, and acknowledges that it was an appearance with which they were unacquainted; Bell. Gallic. lib. iv. c. 29. The tides on the coaſt near the mouth of the Indus are remarkably high, and the effects of them very

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very great, eſpecially that ſudden and abrupt influx of the tide into the mouths of rivers or narrow ſtraits which is known in India by the name of *The Bore*, and is accurately deſcribed by Major Rennell, Introd. xxiv. Mem. 278. In the Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 26., theſe high tides are mentioned, and the deſcription of them nearly reſembles that of the Bore. A very exaggerated account of the tides in the Indian ocean is given by Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. xiii. c. 25. Major Rennell ſeems to think, that Alexander and his followers could not be ſo entirely unacquainted with the phenomenon of the tides, as Herodotus had informed the Greeks, "that in the Red Sea there was a regular ebb "and flow of the tide every day;" lib. ii. c. 11. This is all the explanation of that phenomenon given by Herodotus. But among the ancients there occur inſtances of inattention to facts, related by reſpectable authors, which appear ſurpriſing in modern times. Though Herodotus, as I have juſt now obſerved, gave an account of the voyage performed by Scylax at conſiderable length, neither Alexander, nor his Hiſtorians, take any notice of that event. I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to mention a more remarkable inſtance of the inattention of later writers to an accurate deſcription which Herodotus had given of the Caſpian ſea. From theſe, and other ſimilar inſtances which might have been produced, we may conclude, that the ſlight mention of the regular flow and ebb of tide in the Red Sea, is not a ſufficient reaſon for rejecting, as incredible, Arrian's account of the ſurpriſe of Alexander's ſoldiers when they firſt beheld the extraordinary effects of the tide at the mouth of the Indus.——3. The courſe of Nearchus's voyage, the promontories, the creeks,

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creeks, the rivers, the cities, the mountains, which came ſucceſſively in his view, are ſo clearly deſcribed, and the diſtances of ſuch as were moſt worthy of notice are ſo diſtinctly marked, that M. D'Anville, by comparing theſe with the actual poſition of the country, according to the beſt accounts of it, ancient as well as modern, has been able to point out moſt of the places which Nearchus mentions, with a degree of certainty which does as much honour to the veracity of the Grecian navigator, as to the induſtry, learning, and penetration of the French geographer. Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 132, &c.

In modern times, the Red Sea is a name appropriated to the Arabian Gulf, but the ancients denominated the ocean which ſtretches from that Gulf to India, the Erythræan Sea, from king Erythras, of whom nothing more is known than the name, which in the Greek language ſignifies red. From this caſual meaning of the word, it came to be believed, that it was of a different colour from other ſeas, and conſequently of more dangerous navigation.

NOTE VIII. Sect. I. p. 31.

Alexander was ſo intent on rendering this union of his ſubjects complete, that after his death there was found in his tablets or commentaries, (among other magnificent ſchemes which he meditated,) a reſolution to build ſeveral new cities, ſome in Aſia, and ſome in Europe, and to people thoſe in Aſia with Europeans, and thoſe in Europe with Aſiatics, "that, (ſays the "Hiſtorian,) by intermarriages, and exchange of good "offices,

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" offices, the inhabitants of theſe two great continents " might be gradually moulded into a ſimilarity of " ſentiments, and become attached to each other with " mutual affection." Diod. Sicul. lib. xviii. c. 4.

THE Oriental Hiſtorians have mingled the little that they know concerning the tranſactions of European nations, particularly concerning the reign of Alexander the Great, and his conqueſt of Perſia, with ſo many fabulous and incredible circumſtances, that hardly any attention is due to them. Though they miſrepreſented every event in his life, they entertained an high idea of his great power, diſtinguiſhing him by the appellation of *Eſcander Dhúlcarnein*, i. e. the *Two-horned*, in alluſion to the extent of his dominions, which, according to them, reached from the weſtern to the eaſtern extremity of the earth. Herbelot. Bib. Orient. Article *Eſcander*. Anc. Univ. Hiſt. vol. v. 8vo edit. p. 433. Richardſon's Diſſert. prefixed to his Dictionary of the Perſian and Arabic, p. xii. Whether the Hiſtorians of Indoſtan have given an account of Alexander's invaſion of India with greater accuracy, cannot be known, until ſome of their works, written in the Sanſkreet, are tranſlated. That ſome traditional knowledge of Alexander's invaſion of India is ſtill preſerved in the northern provinces of the Peninſula, is manifeſt from ſeveral circumſtances. The Rajahs of Chitore, who are eſteemed the moſt ancient eſtabliſhment of Hindoo princes, and the nobleſt of the Rajahpout tribes, boaſt of their deſcent from Porus, famous as well in the eaſt as in the weſt for his gallant oppoſition to the Macedonian conqueror. Orme's Fragm. p. 5. Major Rennell has informed me,

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me, by accounts lately received from India, and confirmed by a variety of teſtimonies, that, in the country of Kuttore, the eaſtern extreme of the ancient Bactria, a people who claimed to be the deſcendants of Alexander's followers, were exiſting when Tamerlane invaded that province. In Bijore, a country more to the weſt in the ſame diſtrict, the Bazira of Alexander, there is a tribe at this day which traces its origin to certain perſons left there by the conqueror when he paſſed through that province. Both Abul Fazel, and Soojah Rae, an eaſtern Hiſtorian of good reputation, report this tradition without any material variation. The latter, indeed, adds, that theſe Europeans, if we may call them ſo, continued to preſerve that aſcendency over their neighbours, which their anceſtors may be ſuppoſed to have poſſeſſed when they firſt ſettled here. Although we ſhould reject this pedigree as falſe, yet the bare claim argues the belief of the natives, for which there muſt have been ſome foundation, that Alexander not only conquered Bijore, but alſo transferred that conqueſt to ſome of his own countrymen. Rennell Mem. 2d edit. p. 162. The people of Bijore had likewiſe an high idea of Alexander's extenſive authority; and they, too, denominated him the *Two-horned*, agreeably to the ſtriking emblem of power in all the eaſtern languages. Ayeen Akbery, xi. 194. Many inſtances of this emblem being uſed, will occur to every perſon accuſtomed to read the ſacred Scriptures.

NOTE

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NOTE IX. Sect. I. p. 33.

It ſeems to be an opinion generally received, that Alexander built only two cities in India, Nicæa and Bucephalia, ſituated on the Hydaſpes, the modern Chelum, and that Craterus ſuperintended the building of both. But it is evident, from Arrian, lib. v. c. ult., that he built a third city on the Aceſines, now the Jenaub, under the direction of Hephæſtion; and if it was his object to retain the command of the country, a place of ſtrength on ſome of the rivers to the ſouth of the Hydaſpes ſeems to have been neceſſary for that purpoſe. This part of India has been ſo little viſited in modern times, that it is impoſſible to point out with preciſion the ſituation of theſe cities. If P. Tieffenthaler were well founded in his conjecture, that the river now called Rauvee is the Aceſines of Arrian, Bernouilli, vol. i. p. 39., it is probable that this city was built ſomewhere near Lehore, one of the moſt important ſtations in that part of India, and reckoned in the Ayeen Akbery to be a city of very high antiquity. But Major Rennell, in my opinion, gives good reaſons for ſuppoſing the Jenaub to be the Aceſines of the ancients.

NOTE X. Sect. I. p. 33.

The religious ſcruples which prevented the Perſians from making any voyage by ſea, were known to the ancients. Pliny relates of one of the Magi, who was ſent on an embaſſy from Tiridates to the emperor Nero,

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Nero, "Navigare noluerat, quoniam exſpuere in "Maria, aliiſque mortalium neceſſitatibus violare na- "turam eam, fas non putant;" Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxx. c. 2. This averſion to the ſea they carried ſo far, that, according to the obſervation of a well-informed Hiſtorian, there was not a city of any note in their empire built upon the ſea-coaſt; Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. c. 6. We learn from Dr. Hyde, how intimately theſe ideas were connected with the doctrines of Zoroaſter; Rel. Vet. Perſ. cap. vi. In all the wars of the Perſians with Greece, the fleets of the Great King conſiſted entirely of ſhips furniſhed by the Phenicians, Syrians, the conquered provinces of the Leſſer Aſia, and the iſlands adjacent. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention the quota furniſhed by each country, in order to compoſe the fleet of twelve hundred ſhips with which Xerxes invaded Greece, and among theſe there is not one belonging to Perſia. At the ſame time it is proper to obſerve, that, according to Herodotus, whoſe authority is unexceptionable with regard to this point, Ariabigines, a ſon of Darius, acted as Admiral of the Perſian fleet, and had ſeveral ſatraps of high rank under his command, and both Perſians and Medes ſerved as ſoldiers on board of it; Herod. lib. vii. c. 96, 97. By what motives, or what authority, they were induced to act in this manner, I cannot explain. From ſome religious ſcruples, ſimilar to thoſe of the Perſians, many of the natives of Indoſtan, in our own time, refuſe to embark on board a ſhip, and to ſerve at ſea; and yet, on ſome occaſions, the ſepoys in the ſervice of the European powers have got the better of theſe ſcruples.

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NOTE XI. Sect. I. p. 34.

M. le Baron de Sainte-Croix, in his ingenious and learned Critique des Hiſtoriens d'Alexandre le Grand, p. 96., ſeems to entertain ſome doubt with reſpect to the number of the cities which Alexander is ſaid to have built. Plutarch de Fort. Alex. affirms, that he founded no fewer than ſeventy. It appears from many paſſages in ancient authors, that the buildings of cities, or, what may be conſidered as the ſame, the eſtabliſhment of fortified ſtations, was the mode of maintaining their authority in the conquered nations, adopted not only by Alexander, but by his ſucceſſors. Seleucus and Antiochus, to whom the greateſt part of the Perſian empire became ſubject, were no leſs remarkable for founding new cities than Alexander, and theſe cities ſeem fully to have anſwered the purpoſes of the founders, as they effectually prevented (as I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to obſerve) the revolt of the conquered provinces. Though the Greeks, animated with the love of liberty and of their native country, refuſed to ſettle in the Perſian empire while under the dominion of its native monarchs, even when allured by the proſpect of great advantage, as M. de Sainte-Croix remarks, the caſe became perfectly different, when that empire was ſubjected to their own dominion, and they ſettled there, not as ſubjects, but as maſters. Both Alexander and his ſucceſſors diſcovered much diſcernment in chooſing the ſituation of the cities which they built. Seleucia, which Seleucus founded, is a ſtriking inſtance of this, and

became hardly inferior to Alexandria in number of inhabitants, in wealth, and in importance; Mr. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 250. M. D'Anville, Mem. de Literat. xxx.

NOTE XII. Sect. I. p. 38.

It is from Juſtin we receive the ſlender knowledge we have of the progreſs which Seleucus made in India; lib. xv. c. 4. But we cannot rely on his evidence, unleſs when it is confirmed by the teſtimony of other authors. Plutarch ſeems to aſſert, that Seleucus had penetrated far into India; but that reſpectable writer is more eminent for his diſcernment of characters, and his happy ſelection of thoſe circumſtances which mark and diſcriminate them, than for the accuracy of his hiſtorical reſearches. Pliny, whoſe authority is of greater weight, ſeems to conſider it as certain, that Seleucus had carried his arms into diſtricts of India which Alexander never viſited; Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17. The paſſage in which this is mentioned, is ſomewhat obſcure, but it ſeems to imply, that Seleucus had marched from the Hyphaſis to the Hyſudrus, from thence to Palibothra, and from that to the mouth of the Ganges. The diſtances of the principal ſtations in this march are marked, the whole amounting to 2244 Roman miles. In this ſenſe, M. Bayer underſtands the words of Pliny; Hiſtor. Regni Græcorum Bactriani, p. 37. But to me it appears highly improbable, that the Indian expedition of Seleucus could have continued ſo long as to allow time for operations of ſuch extent. If Seleucus had ad-

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vanced as far into India as the mouth of the Ganges, the ancients muſt have had a more accurate knowledge of that part of the country than they ſeem ever to have poſſeſſed.

NOTE XIII. Sect. I. p. 39.

Major Rennell gives a magnificent idea of this, by informing us, that "the Ganges, after it has "eſcaped from the mountainous tract in which "it had wandered above eight hundred miles," Mem. p. 233. "receives in its courſe through the "plains eleven rivers, ſome of them as large as the "Rhine, and none ſmaller than the Thames, beſides "as many more of leſſer note;" p. 257.

NOTE XIV. Sect. I. p. 39.

In fixing the poſition of Palibothra, I have ventured to differ from Major Rennell, and I venture to do ſo with diffidence. According to Strabo, Palibothra was ſituated at the junction of the Ganges and another river; lib. xv. p. 1028. A. Arrian is ſtill more explicit. He places Palibothra at the confluence of the Ganges and Erranaboas, the laſt of which he deſcribes as leſs than the Ganges or Indus, but greater than any other known river; Hiſt. Ind. c. 10. This deſcription of its ſituation correſponds exactly with that of Allahabad. P. Boudier, to whoſe obſervations the geography of India is much indebted, ſays, that the Jumna, at its junction with the Ganges, appeared to

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him not inferior in magnitude to that river; D'Anville, Antiq. de l'Inde, p. 53. Allahabad is the name which was given to that city by the emperor Akbar, who erected a ſtrong fortreſs there; an elegant delineation of which is publiſhed by Mr. Hodges, No. IV. of his Select Views in India. Its ancient name, by which it is ſtill known among the Hindoos, is *Praeg*, or *Piyag*, and the people of the diſtrict are called *Praegi*, which bears a near reſemblance to Praſij, the ancient appellation of the kingdom of which Palibothra was the capital; P. Tieffenthaler, Bernouilli, tom. i. 223. D'Anville, p. 56. Allahabad is ſuch a noted ſeat of Hindoo devotion, that it is denominated *The king of Worſhipped Places*. Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 35. "The territory around it, to the extent of forty miles, "is deemed holy ground. The Hindoos believe, that "when a man dies in this place, whatever he wiſhes "for he will obtain in his next regeneration. Al- "though they teach that ſuicide in general will be "puniſhed with torments hereafter, yet they conſider "it as meritorious for a man to kill himſelf at Alla- "habad;" Ayeen Akbery, iii. 256. P. Tieffenthaler deſcribes the various objects of veneration at Allahabad, which are ſtill viſited with great devotion by an immenſe number of pilgrims; Bernouilli, tom. i. 224. From all theſe circumſtances, we may conclude it to be a place of great antiquity, and in the ſame ſituation with the Palibothra of antiquity.

Major Rennell has been induced to place Palibothra on the ſame ſite with Patna, chiefly by two conſiderations.——1. From having learned that on or near the ſite of Patna ſtood anciently a very large city named

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named *Patelpoot-ber* or *Patalipoutra*, which nearly reſembles the ancient name of Palibothra. Although there is not now a confluence of two rivers at Patna, he was informed that the junction of the Soane with the Ganges, now twenty-two miles above Patna, was formerly under the walls of that city. The rivers of India ſometimes change their courſe in a ſingular manner, and he produces ſome remarkable inſtances of it. But even ſhould it be allowed, that the accounts which the natives give of this variation in the courſe of the Soane were perfectly accurate, I queſtion whether Arrian's deſcription of the magnitude of the Erranaboas be applicable to that river, certainly not ſo juſtly as to the Jumna.——2. He ſeems to have been influenced, in ſome degree, by Pliny's Itinerary, or Table of Diſtances from Taxila (the modern Attock) to the mouth of the Ganges; Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17. But the diſtances in that Itinerary are marked ſo inaccurately, and in ſome inſtances are ſo palpably erroneous, that one cannot found upon them with much ſecurity. According to it, Palibothra is ſituated four hundred and twenty-five miles below the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges. The actual diſtance, however, between Allahabad and Patna, is not more than two hundred Britiſh miles. A diſagreement ſo conſiderable cannot be accounted for, without ſuppoſing ſome extraordinary error in the Itinerary, or that the point of conflux of the Jumna with the Ganges has undergone a change. For the former of theſe ſuppoſitions there is no authority (as far as I know) from any manuſcript, or for the latter from any tradition. Major Rennell has produced the reaſons which led him to ſuppoſe the ſite of Palibothra to be the ſame with

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that of Patna; Memoires, p. 49—54. Some of the objections which might be made to this ſuppoſition he has foreſeen, and endeavoured to obviate; and after all that I have added to them, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed, if, in a geographical diſcuſſion, my readers are diſpoſed to prefer his deciſion to mine.

NOTE XV. SECT. I. p. 42.

I DO not mention a ſhort inroad into India by Antiochus the Great, about one hundred and ninety-ſeven years poſterior to the invaſion of his anceſtor Seleucus. We know nothing more of this tranſaction, than that the Syrian monarch, after finiſhing the war he carried on againſt the two revolted provinces of Parthia and Bactria, entered India, and concluding a peace with Sophagaſenus, a king of the country, received from him a number of elephants, and a ſum of money; Polyb. lib. x. p. 597, &c. lib. xi. p. 651. edit Caſaub. Juſtin. lib. xv. c. 4. Bayer's Hiſt. Regn. Græcor. Bactr. p. 69, &c.

NOTE XVI. SECT. I. p. 44.

A FACT curſorily related by Strabo, and which has eſcaped the inquiſitive induſtry of M. de Guignes, coincides remarkably with the narrative of the Chineſe writers, and confirms it. The Greeks, he ſays, were deprived of Bactria by tribes or hordes of Scythian Nomades, who came from the country beyond the Jaxartes, and are known by the names of Aſij, Paſiani, Tachari, and Sacarauli; Strab. lib. xi. p. 779. A. The Nomades of the ancients were nations who, like the Tartars, ſubſiſted entirely, or almoſt entirely, as ſhepherds, without agriculture.

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NOTE XVII. Sect. I. p. 46.

As the distance of Arsinoe, the modern Suez, from the Nile, is considerably less than that between Berenice and Coptos, it was by this route that all the commodities imported into the Arabian Gulf, might have been conveyed with most expedition and least expence, into Egypt. But the navigation of the Arabian Gulf, which even in the present improved state of nautical science is slow and difficult, was in ancient times considered by the nations around it to be so extremely perilous, that it led them to give such names to several of its promontories, bays, and harbours, as convey a striking idea of the impression which the dread of this danger had made upon their imagination. The entry into the Gulf they called *Babelmandeb*, the gate or port of affliction. To a harbour not far distant, they gave the name of *Mete*, i. e. Death. A headland adjacent they called *Gardefan*, the Cape of Burial. Other denominations of similar import are mentioned by the author to whom I am indebted for this information. Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 442, &c. It is not surprising then, that the staple of Indian trade should have been transferred from the northern extremity of the Arabian Gulf to Berenice, as by this change a dangerous navigation was greatly shortened. This seems to have been the chief reason that induced Ptolemy to establish the port of communication with India at Berenice, as there were other harbours on the Arabian Gulf which were considerably nearer than it to the Nile. At a later period, after the ruin of Coptos by

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the Emperor Diocletian, we are informed by Abulfeda, Deſcript. Egypt. edit. Michaelis, p. 77, that Indian commodities were conveyed from the Red Sea to the Nile, by the ſhorteſt route, viz. from Coſſeir, probably the Philoteras Portus of Ptolemy, to Cous, the Vicus Apollinis, a journey of four days. The ſame account of the diſtance was given by the natives to Dr. Pococke, Travels, vol. i. p. 87. In conſequence of this, Cous, from a ſmall village, became the city in upper Egypt next in magnitude to Foſtat, or Old Cairo. In proceſs of time, from cauſes which I cannot explain, the trade from the Red Sea by Coſſeir removed to Kene, farther down the river than Cous, Abulf. p. 13. 77. D'Anville Egypte, 196—209. In modern times, all the commodities of India imported into Egypt, are either brought by ſea from Gidda to Suez, and thence carried on camels to Cairo, or are conveyed by land carriage by the caravan returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, Niebuhr Voyage, tom. i. p. 224. Volney, i. 188, &c. This, as far as I have been able to trace it, is a complete account of all the different routes by which the productions of the Eaſt have been conveyed to the Nile, from the firſt opening of that communication. It is ſingular that P. Sicard, Mem. des Miſſions dans le Levant, tom. ii. p. 157, and ſome other reſpectable writers, ſhould ſuppoſe Coſſeir to be the Berenice founded by Ptolemy, although Ptolemy has laid down its latitude at 23° 50′, and Strabo has deſcribed it as nearly under the ſame parallel with that of Syene, lib. ii. p. 195, D. In conſequence of this miſtake, Pliny's computation of the diſtance between Berenice and Coptos, at two hundred and fifty-eight miles, has been deemed erroneous. Pococke, p. 87. But as

Pliny

Pliny not only mentions the total diſtance, but names the different ſtations in the journey, and ſpecifies the number of miles between each; and as the Itinerary of Antoninus coincides exactly with his account, D'Anville Egypte, p. 21, there is no reaſon to call in queſtion the accuracy of it.

NOTE XVIII. Sect. I. p. 48.

Major Rennell is of opinion, "that under the "Ptolemies, the Egyptians extended their navigation to "the extreme point of the Indian continent, and even "ſailed up the Ganges to Palibothra," on the ſame ſite (according to him) with the modern Patna. Introd. p. xxxvi. But had it been uſual to ſail up the Ganges as high as Patna, the interior parts of India muſt have been better known to the ancients than they ever were, and they would not have continued to derive their information concerning them from Megaſthenes alone. Strabo begins his deſcription of India in a very remarkable manner. He requeſts his readers to peruſe with indulgence the account which he gives of it, as it was a country very remote, and few perſons had viſited it; and of theſe, many having ſeen only a ſmall part of the country, related things either from hear-ſay, or, at the beſt, what they had haſtily remarked while they paſſed through it in the courſe of military ſervice, or on a journey. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1005. B. He takes notice that few of the traders from the Arabian Gulf ever reached the Ganges. Ibid. 1006. C. He aſſerts, that the Ganges enters the ſea by one mouth, ibid. 1011. C.; an error into which he could not have fallen

fallen if the navigation of that river had been common in his time. He mentions indeed the ſailing up the Ganges, ibid. 1010, but it is curſorily in a ſingle ſentence; whereas, if ſuch a conſiderable inland voyage of above four hundred miles, through a populous and rich country, had been cuſtomary, or even if it had ever been performed by the Roman, or Greek, or Egyptian traders, it muſt have merited a particular deſcription, and muſt have been mentioned by Pliny and other writers, as there was nothing ſimilar to it in the practice of navigation among the ancients. It is obſerved by Arrian, (or whoever is the author of the Periplus Maris Erythræi,) that previous to the diſcovery of a new route to India, which ſhall be mentioned afterwards, the commerce with that country was carried on in ſmall veſſels which ſailed round every bay, p. 32. Ap. Hudſ. Geogr. Min. Veſſels of ſuch light conſtruction, and which followed this mode of ſailing, were ill fitted for a voyage ſo diſtant as that round Cape Comorin, and up the bay of Bengal, to Patnà. It is not improbable, that the merchants whom Strabo mentions as having reached the Ganges, may have travelled thither by land, either from the countries towards the mouth of the Indus, or from ſome part of the Malabar coaſt, and that the navigation up the Ganges, of which he caſually takes notice, was performed by the natives in veſſels of the country. This opinion derives ſome confirmation from his remarks upon the bad ſtructure of the veſſels which frequented that part of the Indian ocean. From his deſcription of them, p. 1012. C. it is evident that they were veſſels of the country.

NOTE

NOTE XIX. Sect. I. p. 50.

The erroneous ideas of many intelligent writers of antiquity with reſpect to the Caſpian Sea, though well known to every man of letters, are ſo remarkable, and afford ſuch a ſtriking example of the imperfection of their geographical knowledge, that a more full account of them may not only be acceptable to ſome of my readers, but in endeavouring to trace the various routes by which the commodities of the Eaſt were conveyed to the nations of Europe, it becomes neceſſary to enter into ſome detail concerning their various ſentiments with reſpect to this matter. 1. According to Strabo, the Caſpian is a bay, that communicates with the great Northern ocean, from which it iſſues at firſt, by a narrow ſtrait, and then expands into a ſea extending in breadth five hundred ſtadia, lib. xi. p. 773. A. With him Pomponius Mela agrees, and deſcribes the ſtrait by which the Caſpian is connected with the ocean, as of conſiderable length, and ſo narrow that it had the appearance of a river, lib. iii. c. 5. edit. Pliny likewiſe gives a ſimilar deſcription of it, Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 13. In the age of Juſtinian, this opinion concerning the communication of the Caſpian Sea with the ocean, was ſtill prevalent; Coſm. Indicopl. Topog. Chriſt. lib. ii. p. 138. C. 2. Some early writers, by a miſtake ſtill more ſingular, have ſuppoſed the Caſpian Sea to be connected with the Euxine. Quintus Curtius, whoſe ignorance of geography is notorious, has adopted this error, lib. vii. c. 7. edit. 3. Arrian, though a much more judicious writer, and who by reſiding for ſome time

time in the Roman province of Cappadocia, of which he was governor, might have obtained more accurate information, declares in one place, the origin of the Caſpian Sea to be ſtill unknown, and is doubtful whether it was connected with the Euxine, or with the great Eaſtern ocean which ſurrounds India; lib. vii. c. 16. In another place he aſſerts, that there was a communication between the Caſpian and the Eaſtern ocean; lib. v. c. 26. Theſe errors appear more extraordinary, as a juſt deſcription had been given of the Caſpian by Herodotus, near five hundred years before the age of Strabo. "The Caſpian (ſays he) is a ſea "by itſelf, unconnected with any other. Its length is "as much as a veſſel with oars can ſail in fifteen days, "its greateſt breadth as much as it can ſail in eight "days;" lib. i. c. 203. Ariſtotle deſcribes it in the ſame manner, and with his uſual preciſion contends that it ought to be called a great lake, not a ſea; Meteorolog. lib. ii. Diodorus Siculus concurs with them in opinion, vol. ii. lib. xviii. p. 261. None of thoſe authors determine whether the greateſt length of the Caſpian was from North to South, or from Eaſt to Weſt. In the ancient maps which illuſtrate the geography of Ptolemy, it is delineated, as if its greateſt length extended from Eaſt to Weſt. In modern times, the firſt information concerning the true form of the Caſpian which the people of Europe received, was given by Anthony Jenkinſon, an Engliſh merchant, who with a caravan from Ruſſia travelled along a conſiderable part of its coaſt in the year 1558; Hakluyt Collect. vol. i. p. 334. The accuracy of Jenkinſon's deſcription was confirmed by an actual ſurvey of that ſea made by order of Peter the Great, A. D. 1718; and

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and it is now ascertained not only that the Caspian is unconnected with any other sea, but that its length from North to South is considerably more than its greatest breadth from East to West. The length of the Caspian from North to South is about six hundred and eighty miles, and in no part more than two hundred and sixty miles in breadth from East to West. Coxe's Travels, vol. ii. p. 257. The proportional difference of its length and breadth accords nearly with that mentioned by Herodotus. From this detail, however, we learn how the ill-founded ideas concerning it, which were generally adopted, gave rise to various wild schemes of conveying Indian commodities to Europe by means of its supposed communication with the Euxine sea, or with the Northern ocean. It is an additional proof of the attention of Alexander the Great to every thing conducive to the improvement of commerce, that a short time before his death he gave directions to fit out a squadron in the Caspian, in order to survey that sea, and to discover whether it was connected either with the Euxine or Indian ocean; Arrian, lib. vii. c. 16.

NOTE XX. Sect. I. p. 62.

From this curious detail, we learn how imperfect ancient navigation was, even in its most improved state. The voyage from Berenice to Ocelis, could not have taken thirty days, if any other course had been held than that of servilely following the windings of the coast. The voyage from Ocelis to Musiris would be (according to Major Rennell) fifteen days run for an European

European ſhip in the modern ſtile of navigation, being about ſeventeen hundred and fifty marine miles, on a ſtraight courſe; Introd. p. xxxvii. It is remarkable, that though the Periplus Maris Erythræi was written after the voyage of Hippalus, the chief object of the author of it is to deſcribe the ancient courſe along the coſts of Arabia and Perſia, to the mouth of the Indus, and from thence down the weſtern ſhore of the continent to Muſiris. I can account for this, only by ſuppoſing, that from the unwillingneſs of mankind to abandon old habits, the greater part of the traders from Berenice ſtill continued to follow that route to which they were accuſtomed. To go from Alexandria to Muſiris, required (according to Pliny) ninety-four days. In the year 1788, the Boddam, a ſhip belonging to the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company, of a thouſand tons burthen, took only fourteen days more to complete her voyage from Portſmouth to Madras. Such are the improvements which have been made in navigation.

NOTE XXI. Sect. II. p. 63.

It was the opinion of Plato, that in a well-regulated commonwealth the citizens ſhould not engage in commerce, nor the ſtate aim at obtaining maritime power. Commerce, he contends, would corrupt the purity of their morals, and by entering into the ſea-ſervice, they would be accuſtomed to find pretexts for juſtifying conduct ſo inconſiſtent with what was manly and becoming, as would gradually relax the ſtrictneſs of military diſcipline. It had been better for the Athenians,

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nians, he asserts, to have continued to send annually the sons of seven of their principal citizens to be devoured by the Minotaur, than to have changed their ancient manners, and to have become a maritime power. In that perfect republic, of which he delineates the form, he ordains that the capital should be situated at least ten miles from the sea; De Legibus, lib. iv. ab initio. These ideas of Plato were adopted by other philosophers. Aristotle enters into a formal discussion of the question, Whether a state rightly constituted should be commercial or not? and though abundantly disposed to espouse sentiments opposite to those of Plato, he does not venture to decide explicitly with respect to it; De Repub. lib. vii. c. 6. In ages when such opinions prevail, little information concerning commerce can be expected.

NOTE XXII. Sect. II. p. 68.

Pliny, lib. ix. c. 35. Principium ergo culmenque omnium rerum prætij Margaritæ tenent. In lib. xxxvii. c. 4. he affirms, Maximum in rebus humanis prætium, non solum inter gemmas, habet Adamas. These two passages stand in such direct contradiction to one another, that it is impossible to reconcile them, or to determine which is most conformable to truth. I have adhered to the former, because we have many instances of the exorbitant price of pearls, but none, as far as I know, of diamonds having been purchased at a rate so high. In this opinion I am confirmed by a passage in Pliny, lib. xix. c. i.; having mentioned the exorbitant price of *Asbestos*, he says, "æquat prætia "excellentium

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"excellentium Margaritarum;" which implies, that he conſidered pearls to be of higher price than any other commodity.

NOTE XXIII. Sect. II. p. 68.

PLINY has devoted two entire books of his Natural Hiſtory, lib. xii. and xiii. to the enumeration and deſcription of the ſpices, aromatics, ointments, and perfumes, the uſe of which luxury had introduced among his countrymen. As many of theſe were the productions of India, or of the countries beyond it, and as the trade with the Eaſt was carried on to a great extent in the age of Pliny, we may form ſome idea of the immenſe demand for them, from the high price at which they continued to be ſold in Rome. To compare the prices of the ſame commodities in ancient Rome, with thoſe now paid in our own country, is not a gratification of curioſity merely, but affords a ſtandard by which we may eſtimate the different degree of ſucceſs with which the Indian trade has been conducted in ancient and modern times. Many remarkable paſſages in ancient authors, concerning the extravagant price of precious ſtones and pearls among the Romans, as well as the general uſe of them by perſons of all ranks, are collected by Meurſius de Lux. Romanorum, cap. 5.; and by Staniſlaus Robierzyckius, in his treatiſe on the ſame ſubject, lib. ii. c. 1. The Engliſh reader will receive ſufficient information from Dr. Arbuthnot, in his valuable Tables of ancient coins, weights, and meaſures, p. 172, &c.

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NOTE XXIV. SECT. II. p. 71.

M. MAHUDEL, in a memoir read in the academy of inſcriptions and belles letters in the year 1719, has collected the various opinions of the ancients concerning the nature and origin of ſilk, which tend all to prove their ignorance with regard to it. Since the publication of M. Mahudel's memoir, P. du Halde has deſcribed a ſpecies of ſilk, of which I believe he communicated the firſt notice to the moderns. "This is "produced by ſmall inſects nearly reſembling ſnails. "They do not form cocoons either round or oval like "the ſilk-worm, but ſpin very long threads, which "faſten themſelves to trees and buſhes as they are driven "by the wind. Theſe are gathered, and wrought "into ſilk ſtuffs, coarſer than thoſe produced by do-"meſtic ſilk-worms. The inſects which produce this "coarſe ſilk are wild." Deſcription de l'Empire de la Chine, tom. ii. folio, p. 207. This nearly reſembles Virgil's deſcription,

Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia Seres.
Georg. II. 121.

An attentive reader of Virgil will find, that, beſides all the other qualities of a great deſcriptive poet, he poſſeſſed an extenſive knowledge of natural hiſtory. The nature and productions of the wild ſilk-worms are illuſtrated at greater length in the large collection of Memoires concernant l'Hiſtoire, les Sciences, les Arts, &c. des Chinois, tom. ii. p. 575, &c.; and by Pere de

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Mailla, in his voluminous Hiſtory of China, tom. xiii. p. 434. It is a ſingular circumſtance in the hiſtory of ſilk, that, on account of its being an excretion of a worm, the Mahomedans conſider it as an unclean dreſs; and it has been decided, with the unanimous aſſent of all the doctors, that a perſon wearing a garment made entirely of ſilk, cannot lawfully offer up the daily prayers enjoined by the Koran. Herbel. Bibl. Orient. artic. *Harir*.

NOTE XXV. Sect. II. p. 72.

If the uſe of the cotton manufactures of India had been common among the Romans, the various kinds of them would have been enumerated in the Law de Publicanis et Vectigalibus, in the ſame manner as the different kinds of ſpices and precious ſtones. Such a ſpecification would have been equally neceſſary for the direction both of the merchant and of the tax-gatherer.

NOTE XXVI. Sect. II. p. 72.

This part of Arrian's Periplus has been examined with great accuracy and learning by Lieutenant Wilford; and from his inveſtigation it is evident, that the Plithana of Arrian is the modern Pultanah, on the ſouthern banks of the river Godavery, two hundred and ſeventeen Britiſh miles ſouth from Baroach; that the poſition of Tagara is the ſame with that of the modern Dowlatabad, and the high grounds acroſs which the goods were conveyed to Baroach, are the Ballagaut mountains. The bearings and diſtances of theſe dif-

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ferent places, as ſpecified by Arrian, afford an additional proof (were that neceſſary) of the exact information which he had received concerning this diſtrict of India; Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. i. p. 369, &c.

NOTE XXVII. Sect. II. p. 81.

Strabo acknowledges his neglect of the improvements in geography which Hipparchus had deduced from aſtronomical obſervations, and juſtifies it by one of thoſe logical ſubtleties which the ancients were apt to introduce into all their writings. "A geographer," ſays he, (i. e. a deſcriber of the earth,) "is to pay no "attention to what is out of the earth; nor will men, "engaged in conducting the affairs of that part of the "earth which is inhabited, deem the diſtinction and "diviſions of Hipparchus worthy of notice." Lib. ii. 194. C.

NOTE XXVIII. Sect. II. p. 81.

What an high opinion the ancients had of Ptolemy, we learn from Agathemerus, who flouriſhed not long after him. "Ptolemy," ſays he, "who reduced geo-"graphy into a regular ſyſtem, treats of every thing "relating to it, not careleſsly, or merely according "to ideas of his own; but attending to what had "been delivered by more ancient authors, he adopted "from them whatever he found conſonant to truth." Epitome Geogr. lib. i. c. 6. edit. Hudſon. From the ſame admiration of his work, Agathodæmon, an artiſt of Alexandria, prepared a ſeries of maps for the illuſ-

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tration of it, in which the position of all the places mentioned by Ptolemy, with their longitude and latitude, is laid down precisely according to his ideas. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. iii. 412.

NOTE XXIX. Sect. II. p. 83.

As these public Surveys and Itineraries furnished the ancient geographers with the best information concerning the position and distances of many places, it may be proper to point out the manner in which they were completed by the Romans. The idea of a general survey of the whole empire was first formed by Julius Cæsar, and, having been begun by him under authority of a decree of the senate, was finished by Augustus. As Rome was still far inferior to Greece in science, the execution of this great undertaking was committed to three Greeks, men of great abilities, and skilled in every part of philosophy. The survey of the eastern division of the empire was finished by Zenodoxus in fourteen years five months and nine days. That of the northern division was finished by Theodotus in twenty years eight months and ten days. The southern division was finished in twenty-five years one month and ten days. Æthici Cosmographia apud Geographos, editos à Hen. Stephano, 1577. p. 107. This undertaking was worthy of those illustrious persons who planned it, and suited to the magnificence of a great people. Besides this general survey, every new war produced a new delineation and measurement of the countries which were the seat of it. We may conclude from Vegetius, Instit. Rei Militaris, lib. iii. c. 6.

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that every governor of a Roman province was furniſhed with a deſcription of it; in which were ſpecified the diſtance of places in miles, the nature of the roads, the bye-roads, the ſhort cuts, the mountains, the rivers, &c.; all theſe, ſays he, were not only deſcribed in words, but were delineated in a map, that, in deliberating concerning his military movements, the eyes of a general might aid the deciſions of his mind.

NOTE XXX. Sect. II. p. 83.

The conſequence of this miſtake is remarkable. Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. i., computes the latitude of Barrygaza, or Baroach, to be 17° 20′; and that of Cory, or Cape Comorin, to be 13° 20′, which is the difference of four degrees preciſely; whereas the real difference between theſe two places is nearly fourteen degrees.

NOTE XXXI. Sect. II. p. 84.

Ramusio, the publiſher of the moſt ancient and perhaps the moſt valuable Collection of Voyages, is the firſt perſon, as far as I know, who takes notice of this ſtrange error of Ptolemy; Viaggi, vol. i. p. 181. He juſtly obſerves, that the Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea had been more accurate, and had deſcribed the peninſula of India as extending from north to ſouth; Peripl. p. 24. 29.

NOTE XXXII. Sect. II. p. 87.

This error of Ptolemy juſtly merits the name of *enormous*, which I have given to it; and it will appear more ſurpriſing when we recollect, that he muſt have

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been acquainted, not only with what Herodotus relates concerning the circumnavigation of Africa, by order of one of the Egyptian kings, lib. iv. c. 4., but with the opinion of Eratoſthenes, who held that the great extent of the Atlantic ocean was the only thing which prevented a communication between Europe and India by ſea; Strab. Geogr. lib. i. p. 113. A. This error, however, muſt not be imputed wholly to Ptolemy. Hipparchus, whom we may conſider as his guide, had taught that the earth is not ſurrounded by one continuous ocean, but that it is ſeparated by different iſthmuſes, which divide it into ſeveral large baſons; Strab. lib. i. p. 11. B. Ptolemy, having adopted this opinion, was induced to maintain that an unknown country extended from Cattigara to Praſſum on the ſouth eaſt coaſt of Africa; Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. and 5. As Ptolemy's ſyſtem of geography was univerſally received, this error ſpread along with it. In conformity to it the Arabian geographer Edriſſi, who wrote in the twelfth century, taught that a continued tract of land ſtretched eaſtward from Sofala on the African coaſt, until it united with ſome part of the Indian continent; D'Anville, Antiq. p. 187. Annexed to the firſt volume of Geſta Dei per Francos, there is an ancient and very rude map of the habitable globe, delineated according to this idea of Ptolemy. M. Goſſellin, in his map entitled Ptolemæi Syſtema Geographicum, has exhibited this imaginary tract of land which Ptolemy ſuppoſes to have connected Africa with Aſia; Geographie des Grecs analyſée.

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NOTE XXXIII. Sect. II. p. 89.

In this part of the Diſquiſition, as well as in the map prepared for illuſtrating it, the geographical ideas of M. D'Anville, to which Major Rennell has given the ſanction of his approbation, Introd. p. xxxix. have been generally adopted. But M. Goſſellin has lately publiſhed, "The Geography of the Greeks analiſed; "or, the Syſtems of Eratoſthenes, Strabo, and Ptole- "my, compared with each other, and with the Know- "ledge which the Moderns have acquired;" a learned and ingenious work, in which he differs from his countryman with reſpect to many of his determinations. According to M. Goſſellin, the Magnum Promontorium, which M. D'Anville concludes to be Cape Romania, at the ſouthern extremity of the peninſula of Malacca, is the point of Bragu, at the mouth of the great river Ava; near to which he places Zaba, ſuppoſed by M. D'Anville, and by Barros, Decad. ii. liv. vi. c. 1. to be ſituated on the ſtrait of Sincapura or Malacca. The Magnus Sinus of Ptolemy he holds to be the ſame with the Gulf of Martaban, not the Gulf of Siam, according to M. D'Anville's deciſion. The poſition of Cattigara, as he endeavours to prove, correſponds to that of Mergui, a conſiderable port on the weſt coaſt of the kingdom of Siam, and that Thinæ, or Sinæ Metropolis, which M. D'Anville removes as far as Sin-hoa, in the kingdom of Cochin China, is ſituated on the ſame river with Mergui, and now bears the name of Tana-ſerim. The Ibadij Inſula of Ptolemy, which M. D'Anville determines to be Sumatra, he

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contends, is one of that cluſter of ſmall iſles which lie off this part of the coaſt of Siam; p. 137—148. According to M. Goſſellin's ſyſtem, the ancients never ſailed through the Straits of Malacca, had no knowledge of the iſland of Sumatra, and were altogether unacquainted with the Eaſtern Ocean. If to any of my readers theſe opinions appear to be well founded, the navigation and commerce of the ancients in India muſt be circumſcribed within limits ſtill more confined than thoſe which I have allotted to them. From the Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 7. we learn that Cheen was an ancient name of the kingdom of Pegu; as that country borders upon Ava, where M. Goſſellin places the Great Promontory, this near reſemblance of names may appear, perhaps, to confirm his opinion that Sinæ Metropolis was ſituated on this coaſt, and not ſo far Eaſt as M. D'Anville has placed it.

As Ptolemy's geography of this eaſtern diviſion of Aſia is more erroneous, obſcure, and contradictory than in any other part of his work, and as all the manuſcripts of it, both Greek and Latin, are remarkably incorrect in the two chapters which contain the deſcription of the counties beyond the Ganges, M. D'Anville, in his Memoir concerning the limits of the world known to the ancients beyond the Ganges, has admitted into it a larger portion of conjecture than we find in the other reſearches of that cautious geographer. He likewiſe builds more than uſual upon the reſemblances between the ancient and modern names of places, though at all times he diſcovers a propenſity, perhaps too great, to trace theſe, and to reſt upon them. Theſe reſemblances are often, indeed,

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very ſtriking, and have led him to many happy diſcoveries. But in peruſing his works, it is impoſſible, I ſhould think, not to perceive that ſome which he mentions are far fetched and fanciful. Whenever I follow him, I have adopted only ſuch concluſions as ſeem to be eſtabliſhed with his accuſtomed accuracy.

NOTE XXXIV. Sect. II. p. 99.

The Author of the Circumnavigation of the Eythræan Sea has marked the diſtances of many of the places which he mentions, with ſuch accuracy as renders it a nearer approach, than what is to be found in any writer of antiquity, to a complete ſurvey of the coaſt from Myos-hormus, on the weſt ſide of the Arabian Gulf, along the ſhores of Ethiopia, Arabia, Perſia, and Caramania, to the mouth of the Indus, and thence down the weſt coaſt of the Indian Peninſula to Muſiris and Barace. This adds to the value of this ſhort treatiſe, which, in every other reſpect, poſſeſſes great merit. It may be conſidered as a remarkable proof of the extent and accuracy of this Author's intelligence concerning India, that he is the only ancient writer who appears in any degree to have been acquainted with the great diviſion of the country, which ſtill ſubſiſts, viz. Indoſtan Proper, comprehending the northern provinces of the Peninſula, and the Deccan, comprehending the ſouthern provinces. "From Barygaza "(ſays he) the continent ſtretches to the ſouth; hence "that diſtrict is called Dachinabades, for, in the "language of the country, the ſouth is called Dachanos; Peripl. p. 29. As the Greeks and Romans, when

when they adopt any foreign name, always gave it a termination peculiar to their own language, which the grammatical ſtructure of both tongues rendered, in ſome degree, neceſſary, it is evident that Dachanos is the ſame with Deccan, which word has ſtill the ſame ſignification, and is ſtill the name of that diviſion of the Peninſula. The northern limit of the Deccan at preſent is the river Narbudda, where our Author likewiſe fixes it. Peripl. ibid.

NOTE XXXV. SECT. II. p. 103.

THOUGH, in deducing the latitudes of places from obſervations of the ſun or ſtars, the ancient aſtronomers neglected ſeveral corrections, which ought to have been applied, their reſults were ſometimes exact to a few minutes, but at other times they appear to have been erroneous to the extent of two, or even three degrees, and may perhaps be reckoned, one with another, to have come within half a degree of the truth. This part of the ancient geography would therefore have been tolerably accurate, if there had been a ſufficient number of ſuch determinations. Theſe, however, were far from being numerous, and appear to have been confined to ſome of the more remarkable places in the countries which ſurround the Mediterranean ſea.

WHEN, from want of more accurate obſervations, the latitude was inferred from the length of the longeſt or ſhorteſt day, no great degree of preciſion was, in any caſe, to be expected, and leaſt of all in the vicinity of

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of the Equator. An error of a quarter of an hour, which, without ſome mode of meaſuring time more accurate than ancient obſervers could employ, was not eaſily avoided, might produce, in ſuch ſituations, an error of four degrees in the determination of the latitude.

WITH reſpect to places in the torrid zone, there was another reſource for determining the latitude. This was by obſerving the time of the year when the ſun was vertical to any place, or when bodies that ſtood perpendicular to the horizon had no ſhadow at noon-day; the ſun's diſtance from the Equator at that time, which was known from the principles of aſtronomy, was equal to the latitude of the place. We have inſtances of the application of this method in the determination of the parallels of Syene and Meroe. The accuracy which this method would admit of, ſeems to be limited to about half a degree, and this only on the ſuppoſition that the obſerver was ſtationary; for if he was travelling from one place to another, and had not an opportunity of correcting the obſervation of one day by that of the day following, he was likely to deviate much more conſiderably from the truth.

WITH reſpect to the longitude of places, as eclipſes of the moon are not frequent, and could ſeldom be of uſe for determining it, and only when there were aſtronomers to obſerve them with accuracy, they may be left out of the account altogether when we are examining the geography of remote countries. The differences of the meridians of places were therefore anciently aſcertained entirely by the bearings and diſtances

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tances of one place from another, and of conſequence all the errors of reckonings, ſurveys, and itineraries, fell chiefly upon the longitude, in the ſame manner as happens at preſent in a ſhip which has no method of determining its longitude, but by comparing the dead-reckoning with the obſervations of the latitude; though with this difference, that the errors, to which the moſt ſkilful of the ancient navigators was liable, were far greater than what the moſt ignorant ſhip-maſter of modern times, provided with a compaſs, can well commit. The length of the Mediterranean meaſured, in degrees of longitude, from the Pillars of Hercules, to the Bay of Iſſus, is leſs than forty degrees; but in Ptolemy's maps it is more than ſixty, and, in general, his longitudes, counting from the meridian of Alexandria, eſpecially toward the Eaſt, are erroneous nearly in the ſame proportion. It appears, indeed, that in remote ſeas, the coaſts were often delineated from an imperfect account of the diſtances ſailed, without the leaſt knowledge of the bearings or direction of the ſhip's courſe. Ptolemy, it is true, uſed to make an allowance of about one-third for the winding of a ſhip's courſe. Geogr. lib. i. c. 12.; but it is plain, that the application of this general rule could ſeldom lead to an accurate concluſion. Of this there is a ſtriking inſtance in the form which that geographer has given to the Peninſula of India. From the Barygazenum Promontorium to the place marked Locus unde ſolvunt in Chryſen navigantes, that is, from Surat on the Malabar coaſt, to about Narſapour on the Coromandel coaſt, the diſtance meaſured along the ſea-ſhore is nearly the ſame with what it is in reality; that is, about five hundred and twenty leagues.

But

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But the miſtake in the direction is aſtoniſhing, for the Malabar and Coromandel coaſt, inſtead of ſtretching to the ſouth, and interſecting one another at Cape Comorin, in a very acute angle, are extended by Ptolemy almoſt in the ſame ſtraight line from weſt to eaſt, declining a little to the ſouth. This coaſt is, at the ſame time, marked with ſeveral bays and promontories, nearly reſembling, in their poſition, thoſe which actually exiſt on it. All theſe circumſtances compared together, point out very clearly what were the materials from which the ancient map of India was compoſed. The ſhips which had viſited the coaſt of that country, had kept an account of the time which they took to ſail from one place to another, and had marked, as they ſtood along ſhore, on what hand the land lay, when they ſhaped their courſe acroſs a bay, or doubled a promontory. This imperfect journal, with an inaccurate account, perhaps, of the latitude of one or two places, was probably all the information concerning the coaſt of India, which Ptolemy was able to procure. That he ſhould have been able to procure no better information from merchants who ſailed with no particular view of exploring the coaſt, will not appear wonderful, if we conſider that even the celebrated Periplus of Hanno would not enable a geographer to lay down the coaſt of Africa with more preciſion, than Ptolemy has delineated that of India.

NOTE XXXVI. SECT. II. p. 114.

THE introduction of the ſilk-worm into Europe, and the effects which this produced, came under the view of

of Mr. Gibbon, in writing the hiſtory of the Emperor Juſtinian, and though it was an incident of ſubordinate importance only, amidſt the multiplicity of great tranſactions which muſt have occupied his attention, he has examined this event with an accuracy, and related it with a preciſion, which would have done honour to an author who had no higher object of research. Vol. iv. p. 71, &c. Nor is it here only that I am called upon to aſcribe to him this merit. The ſubject of my inquiries has led me ſeveral times upon ground which he had gone over, and I have uniformly received information from the induſtry and diſcernment with which he has ſurveyed it.

NOTE XXXVII. SECT. III. p. 118.

THIS voyage, together with the obſervations of Abu Zeid al Haſan of Siraf, was publiſhed by M. Renaudot, A. D. 1718, under the title of "Anciennes Relations des Indes, et de la Chine, de deux Voyageurs Mahometans, qui y allerent dans le Neuvieme Siecle traduites de Arabe, avec des remarques ſur les principaux endroits de ces Relations." As M. Renaudot, in his remarks, repreſents the literature and police of the Chineſe, in colours very different from thoſe of the ſplendid deſcriptions which a blind admiration had prompted the Jeſuits to publiſh, two zealous miſſionaries have called in queſtion the authenticity of theſe Relations, and have aſſerted that the authors of them had never been in China; P. Premare Lettr. edifiantes et curieuſes, tom. xix. p. 420, &c. P. Parennin, ibid. tom. xxi. p. 158, &c. Some doubts concerning their authen-

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authenticity were entertained likewiſe by ſeveral learned men in England, on account of M. Renaudot's having given no notice of the manuſcript which he tranſlated, but that he found it in the library of M. le Comte de Seignelay. As no perſon had ſeen the manuſcript ſince that time, the doubts increaſed, and M. Renaudot was charged with the crime of impoſing upon the public. But the Colbert Manuſcripts having been depoſited in the King's Library, as (fortunately for literature) moſt private collections are in France, M. de Guignes, after a long ſearch, diſcovered the identical manuſcript to which M. Renaudot refers. It appears to have been written in the twelfth century; Journal des Scavans, Dec. 1764, p. 315, &c. As I had not the French edition of M. Renaudot's book, my references are made to the Engliſh tranſlation. The Relation of the two Arabian Travellers is confirmed, in many points, by their countryman Maſſoudi, who publiſhed his treatiſe on univerſal hiſtory, to which he gives the fantaſtical title of "Meadows of Gold, and "Mines of Jewels," a hundred and ſix years after their time. From him, likewiſe, we receive ſuch an account of India in the tenth century, as renders it evident that the Arabians had then acquired an extenſive knowledge of that country. According to his deſcription, the peninſula of India was divided into four kingdoms. The firſt was compoſed of the provinces ſituated on the Indus, and the rivers which fall into it; the capital of which was Moultan. The capital of the ſecond kingdom was Canoge, which, from the ruins of it ſtill remaining, appears to have been a very large city; Rennell's Memoirs, p. 54. In order to give an idea

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idea of its populouſneſs, the Indian hiſtorians aſſert, that it contained thirty thouſand ſhops, in which betel-nut was ſold, and ſixty thouſand ſets of muſicians and ſingers, who paid a tax to government; Feriſhta, tranſlated by Dow, vol. i. p. 32. The third kingdom was Cachemire. Maſſoudi, as far as I know, is the firſt author who mentions this paradiſe of India, of which he gives a ſhort but juſt deſcription. The fourth is the kingdom of Guzerate, which he repreſents as the greateſt and moſt powerful; and he concurs with the two Arabian Travellers, in giving the ſovereigns of it the appellation of Balhara. What Maſſoudi relates concerning India is more worthy of notice, as he himſelf had viſited that country; Notices et Extraits des Manuſcrits de la Bibliotheque du Roi, tom. i. p. 9, 10. Maſſoudi confirms what the two Arabian Travellers relate, concerning the extraordinary progreſs of the Indians in aſtronomical ſcience. According to his account, a temple was built during the reign of Brahman, the firſt monarch of India, with twelve towers, repreſenting the twelve ſigns of the zodiac; and in which was delineated, a view of all the ſtars as they appear in the heavens. In the ſame reign was compoſed the famous Sind-Hind, which ſeems to be the ſtandard treatiſe of Indian aſtronomy; Notices, &c. tom. i. p. 7. Another Arabian author, who wrote about the middle of the fourteenth century, divides India into three parts. The northern comprehending all the provinces on the Indus. The middle, extending from Guzerate to the Ganges. The ſouthern, which he denominates Comar, from Cape Comorin; Notices, &c. tom. ii. p. 46.

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NOTE XXXVIII. Sect. III. p. 120.

The naval skill of the Chineſe ſeems not to have been ſuperior to that of the Greeks, the Romans, or Arabians. The courſe which they held from Canton to Siraf, near the mouth of the Perſian Gulf, is deſcribed by their own authors. They kept as near as poſſible to the ſhore until they reached the iſland of Ceylon, and then doubling Cape Comorin, they ſailed along the weſt ſide of the Peninſula, as far as the mouth of the Indus, and thence ſteered along the coaſt to the place of their deſtination; Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 367. Some authors have contended, that both the Arabians and Chineſe were well acquainted with the mariners compaſs, and the uſe of it in navigation; but it is remarkable that in the Arabic, Turkiſh, and Perſian languages there is no original name for the compaſs. They commonly call it *Boſſola*, the Italian name, which ſhews that the knowledge of this uſeful inſtrument was communicated to them by the Europeans. There is not one ſingle obſervation, of ancient date, made by the Arabians on the variation of the needle, or any inſtruction deduced from it, for the aſſiſtance of navigators. Sir John Chardin, one of the moſt learned and beſt informed travellers who has viſited the Eaſt, having been conſulted upon this point, returns for anſwer, "I boldly aſſert, that the Aſiatics are be-"holden to us for this wonderful inſtrument, which "they had from Europe a long time before the Portu-"gueſe conqueſts. For, firſt, their compaſſes are ex-"actly like ours, and they buy them of Europeans as

" much as they can, ſcarce daring to meddle with their " needles themſelves. Secondly, it is certain that the " old navigators only coaſted it along, which I impute " to their want of this inſtrument to guide and in- " ſtruct them in the middle of the ocean. We can- " not pretend to ſay that they were afraid of venturing " far from home, for the Arabians, the firſt naviga- " tors in the world, in my opinion, at leaſt for the " Eaſtern ſeas, have, time out of mind, ſailed from " the bottom of the Red Sea, all along the coaſt of " Africa; and the Chineſe have always traded with " Java and Sumatra, which is a very conſiderable " voyage. So many iſlands uninhabited and yet pro- " ductive, ſo many lands unknown to the people I " ſpeak of, are a proof that the old navigators had not " the art of ſailing on the main ſea. I have nothing but " argument to offer touching this matter, having never " met with any perſon in Perſia or the Indies to in- " form me when the compaſs was firſt known among " them, though I made inquiry of the moſt learned " men in both countries. I have ſailed from the Indies " to Perſia in Indian ſhips, when no European has " been aboard but myſelf. The pilots were all In- " dians, and they uſed the fore-ſtaff and quadrant for " their obſervations. Theſe inſtruments they have " from us, and made by our artiſts, and they do not " in the leaſt vary from ours, except that the charac- " ters are Arabic. The Arabians are the moſt ſkilful " navigators of all the Aſiatics or Africans; but nei- " ther they nor the Indians make uſe of charts; and " they do not much want them: ſome they have, but " they are copied from ours, for they are altogether " ignorant of perſpective." Inquiry when the Maho-

medans

medans firſt entered China, p. 141, &c. When M. Niehbuhr was at Cairo, he found a magnetic needle in the poſſeſſion of a Mahomedan, which ſerved to point out the Kaaba, and he gave it the name of *El Magnatis*, a clear proof of its European origin. Voyage en Arabie, tom. ii. p. 169.

NOTE XXXIX. Sect. III. p. 121.

Some learned men, Cardan, Scaliger, &c. have imagined that the Vaſa Murrhina, particularly deſcribed by Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxxvii. and occaſionally mentioned by ſeveral ancient authors both Greek and Roman, were the true porcelain of China. M. l'Abbé Le Bland and M. Larcher have examined this opinion, with full as much induſtry and erudition as the ſubject merited, in two Diſſertations publiſhed in Mem. de Literat. tom. xliii. From them it is evident that the Vaſa Murrhina were formed of a tranſparent ſtone, dug out of the earth in ſome of the Eaſtern provinces of Aſia. Theſe were imitated in veſſels of coloured glaſs. As both were beautiful and rare, they were ſold at a very high price to the luxurious citizens of Rome.

NOTE XL. Sect. III. p. 123.

The progreſs of Chriſtianity, and of Mahomedaniſm, both in China and India, is atteſted by ſuch evidence as leaves no doubt with reſpect to it. This evidence is collected by Aſſemannus, Biblioth. Orient. vol. iv. p. 437, &c. 521, &c.; and by M. Renaudot,

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in two Diſſertations annexed to Anciennes Relations; and by M. de la Croze, Hiſtoire de Chriſtianiſme des Indes. In our own age, however, we know that the number of proſelytes to either of theſe religions is extremely ſmall, eſpecially in India. A Gentoo conſiders all the diſtinctions and privileges of his caſt, as belonging to him by an excluſive and incommunicable right. To convert, or to be converted, are ideas equally repugnant to the principles moſt deeply rooted in his mind; nor can either the Catholic or Proteſtant miſſionaries in India boaſt of having overcome theſe prejudices, except among a few in the loweſt caſts, or of ſuch as have loſt their caſt altogether. This laſt circumſtance is a great obſtacle to the progreſs of Chriſtianity in India. As Europeans eat the fleſh of that animal which the Hindoos deem ſacred, and drink intoxicating liquors, in which practices they are imitated by the converts to Chriſtianity, this ſinks them to a level with the Pariars, the moſt contemptible and odious race of men. Some Catholic miſſionaries were ſo ſenſible of this, that they affected to imitate the dreſs and manner of living of Brahmins, and refuſed to aſſociate with the Pariars, or to admit them to the participation of the ſacraments. But this was condemned by the apoſtolic legate Tournon, as inconſiſtent with the ſpirit and precepts of the Chriſtian religion; Voyage aux Indes Orientales, par M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 58. note. Notwithſtanding the labours of miſſionaries for upwards of two hundred years, (ſays a late ingenious writer,) and the eſtabliſhments of different Chriſtian nations, who ſupport and protect them, out of, perhaps, one hundred millions of Hindoos, there are not twelve thouſand Chriſtians, and thoſe

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thoſe almoſt entirely *Chancalas*, or outcaſts. Sketches relating to the hiſtory, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindoos, p. 48. The number of Mahomedans, or Moors, now in Indoſtan, is ſuppoſed to be near ten millions; but they are not the original inhabitants of the country, but the deſcendants of adventurers, who have been pouring in from Tartary, Perſia, and Arabia, ever ſince the invaſion of Mahmoud of Gazna, A. D. 1002, the firſt Mahomedan conqueror of India. Orme Hiſt. of Military Tranſact. in Indoſtan, vol. i. p. 24. Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Gaznaviah*. As the manners of the Indians in ancient times ſeem to have been, in every reſpect, the ſame with thoſe of the preſent age, it is probable, that the Chriſtians and Mahomedans, ſaid to be ſo numerous in India and China, were chiefly foreigners, allured thither by a lucrative commerce, or their deſcendants. The number of Mahomedans in China has been conſiderably increaſed by a practice, common among them, of buying children in years of famine, whom they educate in the Mahomedan religion. Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, tom. vi. p. 357.

NOTE XLI. Sect. III. p. 129.

From the Chronicle of Andrew Dandulo, Doge of Venice, who was elevated to that high ſtation at a time when his countrymen had eſtabliſhed a regular trade with Alexandria, and imported from it all the productions of the Eaſt, it was natural to expect ſome information concerning their early trade with that country; but, except an idle tale concerning ſome

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Venetian ſhips which had ſailed to Alexandria about the year 828, contrary to a decree of the ſtate, and which ſtole thence the body of St. Mark; Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. lib. 8. c. 2. p. 170.; I find no other hint concerning the communication between the two countries. On the contrary, circumſtances occur, which ſhew that the reſort of Europeans to Egypt had ceaſed, almoſt entirely, for ſome time. Prior to the ſeventh and eighth centuries, the greater part of the public deeds in Italy, and in other countries of Europe, were written upon paper fabricated of the Egyptian Papyrus; but after that period, as Europeans ſeldom ventured to trade in Alexandria, almoſt all charters and other deeds are written upon parchment. Murat. Antiq. Ital. Medii Ævi, vol. iii. p. 832. I have been induced, both in the text and in this note, to ſtate theſe particulars concerning the interruption of trade between the Chriſtians and Mahomedans ſo fully, in order to correct an error into which ſeveral modern authors have fallen, by ſuppoſing, that ſoon after the firſt conqueſts of the Caliphs, the trade with India returned into its ancient channels, and the merchants of Europe reſorted with the ſame freedom as formerly to the ports of Egypt and Syria.

NOTE XLII. Sect. III. p. 134.

It is proper to remark (ſays Mr. Stewart) that the Indians have an admirable method of rendering their religion lucrative, it being uſual for the Faquirs to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the ſea-coaſts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, ſpices, and other

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other precious articles, of ſmall bulk, which they exchange, on their return, for gold-duſt, muſk, and other things of a ſimilar nature, concealing them eaſily in their hair, and in the cloths round their middle, carrying on, in proportion to their numbers, no inconſiderable traffic by theſe means. Account of the Kingdom of Thibet, Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lxvii. part ii. p. 483.

NOTE XLIII. Sect. III. p. 143.

Caffa is the moſt commodious ſtation for trade in the Black Sea. While in the hands of the Genoeſe, who kept poſſeſſion of it above two centuries, they rendered it the ſeat of an extenſive and flouriſhing commerce. Even under all the diſadvantages of its ſubjection, at preſent, to the Turkiſh government, it continues to be a place of conſiderable trade. Sir John Chardin, who viſited it A. D. 1672, relates, that during his reſidence of forty days there, above four hundred ſhips arrived at Caffa, or ſailed from it. Voyages, i. 48. He obſerved there, ſeveral remains of Genoeſe magnificence. The number of its inhabitants, according to M. Peyſonnel, amounts ſtill to eighty thouſand. Commerce de la Mer Noire, tom. i. p. 15. He deſcribes its trade as very great.

NOTE XLIV. Sect. III. p. 145.

The rapacity and inſolence of the Genoeſe ſettled in Conſtantinople, are painted by Nicephorus Gregoras, an eye-witneſs of their conduct, in very ſtriking colours. "They," ſays he, "now," i. e. about the

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year 1340, "dreamed that they had acquired the do-
"minion of the ſea, and claimed an excluſive right to
"the trade of the Euxine, prohibiting the Greeks to
"ſail to the Mæotis, the Cherſoneſus, or any part of
"the coaſt beyond the mouth of the Danube, without
"a licence from them. This excluſion they extended
"likewiſe to the Venetians, and their arrogance pro-
"ceeded ſo far as to form a ſcheme of impoſing a toll
"upon every veſſel paſſing through the Boſphorus."
Lib. xviii. c. 2. § 1.

NOTE XLV. SECT. III. p. 146.

A PERMISSION from the Pope was deemed ſo neceſ-
ſary to authoriſe a commercial intercourſe with infidels,
that long after this period, in the year 1454, Nicho-
las V, in his famous bull in favour of prince Henry of
Portugal, among other privileges, grants him a licence
to trade with Mahomedans, and refers to ſimilar con-
ceſſions from Pope Martin V.; and Eugenius, to kings
of Portugal. Leibnitz Codex Jur. Gent. Diplomat.
Pars I. p. 489.

NOTE XLVI. SECT. III. p. 148.

NEITHER Jovius, the profeſſed panegyriſt of the
Medici, nor Jo. M. Brutus, their detractor, though
both mention the exorbitant wealth of the family,
explain the nature of the trade by which it was ac-
quired. Even Machiavel, whoſe genius delighted
in the inveſtigation of every circumſtance which
contributed to aggrandize or depreſs nations, ſeems
not

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not to have viewed the commerce of his country as a ſubject that merited any elucidation. Denina, who has entitled the firſt chapter of his eighteenth book, "The Origin of the Medici, and the Commencement "of their Power and Grandeur," furniſhes little information with regard to the trade carried on by them. This ſilence of ſo many authors is a proof that hiſtorians had not yet begun to view commerce as an object of ſuch importance in the political ſtate of nations, as to enter into any detail concerning its nature and effects. From the references of different writers to Scipio Ammirato, Iſtorie Fiorentine; to Pagnini, Della Decima ed altri gravezze della Mercatura di Fiorentini, and to Balducci, Practica della Mercatura, I ſhould imagine that ſomething more ſatisfactory may be learned concerning the trade both of the republic and the family of Medici; but I could not find any of theſe books either in Edinburgh or in London.

NOTE XLVII. Sect. III. p. 149.

Leibnitz has preſerved a curious paper, containing the inſtructions of the republic of Florence to the two ambaſſadors ſent to the Soldan of Egypt, in order to negotiate this treaty with him, together with the report of theſe ambaſſadors on their return. The great object of the republic was, to obtain liberty of trading in all parts of the Soldan's dominions, upon the ſame terms with the Venetians. The chief privileges which they ſolicited, were; 1. A perfect freedom of admiſſion into every port belonging to the Soldan, protection while they continued in it, and liberty of departure at

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at what time they chose. 2. Permission to have a consul, with the same rights and jurisdiction as those of the Venetians; and liberty to build a church, a warehouse, and a bath, in every place where they settled. 3. That they should not pay for goods imported or exported higher duties than were paid by the Venetians. 4. That the effects of any Florentine who died in the dominions of the Soldan should be consigned to the consul. 5. That the gold and silver coin of Florence should be received in payments. All these privileges (which shew on what equal and liberal terms Christians and Mahomedans now carried on trade) the Florentines obtained; but from the causes mentioned in the text, they seem never to have acquired any considerable share in the commerce with India. Leibnitz, Mantissa Cod. Jur. Gent. Diplom. Pars altera, p. 163.

NOTE XLVIII. Sect. III. p. 155.

The Eastern parts of Asia are now so completely explored, that the first imperfect accounts of them, by Marco Polo, attract little of that attention which was originally excited by the publication of his travels; and some circumstances in his narrative have induced different authors to justify this neglect, by calling in question the truth of what he relates, and even to assert that he had never visited those countries which he pretends to describe. He does not, say they, ascertain the position of any one place, by specifying its longitude or latitude. He gives names to provinces and cities, particularly in his description of Cathay, which have no resemblance to those which they now bear. We may observe, however, that as Marco Polo seems to

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to have been, in no degree, a man of ſcience, it was not to be expected that he ſhould fix the poſition of places with geographical accuracy. As he travelled through China, either in the ſuite of the great Khan, or in execution of his orders, it is probable that the names which he gives to different provinces and cities, are thoſe by which they were known to the Tartars, in whoſe ſervice he was, not their original Chineſe names. Some inaccuracies which have been obſerved in the relation of his travels, may be accounted for, by attending to one circumſtance, that it was not publiſhed from a regular journal, which, perhaps, the viciſſitudes in his ſituation, during ſuch a long ſeries of adventures, did not permit him to keep, or to preſerve. It was compoſed after his return to his native country, and chiefly from recollection. But notwithſtanding this diſadvantage, his account of thoſe regions of the Eaſt, towards which my inquiries have been directed, contains information with reſpect to ſeveral particulars, altogether unknown in Europe at that time, the accuracy of which is now fully confirmed. Mr. Marſden, whoſe accuracy and diſcernment are well known, traces his deſcription of the iſland which he calls Java minor, evidently Sumatra; from which it is apparent that, as Marco Polo had reſided a conſiderable time in that iſland, he had examined ſome parts with care, and had inquired with diligence concerning others. Hiſt. of Sumat. p. 281. I ſhall mention ſome other particulars with reſpect to India, which, though they relate to matters of no great conſequence, afford the beſt proof of his having viſited theſe countries, and of his having obſerved the manners and cuſtoms of the people with attention. He gives

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gives a diſtinct account of the nature and preparation of Sago, the principal article of ſubſiſtence among all the nations of Malayan race, and he brought the firſt ſpecimen of this ſingular production to Venice. Ramuſ. lib. iii. c. 16. He takes notice, likewiſe, of the general cuſtom of chewing Betel, and his deſcription of the mode of preparing it is the ſame with that ſtill in uſe. Ramuſ. Viaggi, i. p. 55. D. 56. B. He even deſcends into ſuch detail as to mention the peculiar manner of feeding horſes in India, which ſtill continues. Ramuſ. p. 53. F. What is of greater importance, we learn from him, that the trade with Alexandria continued when he travelled through India, to be carried on in the ſame manner as I conjectured it to have been in ancient times. The commodities of the Eaſt were ſtill brought to the Malabar coaſt by veſſels of the country, and conveyed thence, together with pepper, and other productions peculiar to that part of India, by ſhips which arrived from the Red Sea. Lib. iii. c. 27. This, perhaps, may account for the ſuperior quality which Sanudo aſcribes to the goods brought to the coaſt of Syria from the Perſian Gulf, above thoſe imported into Egypt by the Red Sea. The former were choſen and purchaſed in the places where they grew, or where they were manufactured, by the merchants of Perſia, who ſtill continued their voyages to every part of the Eaſt; while the Egyptian merchants, in making up their cargoes, depended upon the aſſortment of goods brought to the Malabar coaſt by the natives. To ſome perſons in his own age, what Marco Polo related concerning the numerous armies and immenſe revenues of the Eaſtern princes, appeared ſo extravagant, (though perfectly conſonant to what we

now

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how know concerning the population of China, and the wealth of Indoſtan,) that they gave him the name of *Meſſer Marco Milioni.* Prefat. de Ramuſ. p. 4. But among perſons better informed, the reception he met with was very different. Columbus, as well as the men of ſcience with whom he correſponded, placed ſuch confidence in the veracity of his relations, that upon them, the ſpeculations and theories, which led to the diſcovery of the New World, were in a great meaſure founded. Life of Columbus by his Son, c. 7. and 8.

NOTE XLIX. Sect. III. p. 163.

In the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, the wife of Philip le Bel, king of France, having been ſome days in Bruges, was ſo much ſtruck with the grandeur and wealth of that city, and particularly with the ſplendid appearance of the citizens wives, that ſhe was moved (ſays Guicciardini) by female envy to exclaim with indignation, "I thought that I had been the only queen "here, but I find there are many hundreds more." Deſcrit. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 408.

NOTE L. Sect. III. p. 165.

In the hiſtory of the reign of Charles V. vol. i. p. 163. I obſerved, that, during the war excited by the famous League of Cambray, while Charles VIII. of France could not procure money at a leſs premium than forty-two per cent, the Venetians raiſed what ſums they pleaſed at five per cent. But this, I imagine,

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gine, is not to be conſidered as the uſual commercial rate of intereſt at that period, but as a voluntary and public-ſpirited effort of the citizens, in order to ſupport their country at a dangerous criſis. Of ſuch laudable exertions, there are ſeveral ſtriking inſtances in the hiſtory of the republic. In the year 1379, when the Genoeſe, after obtaining a great naval victory over the Venetians, were ready to attack their capital, the citizens, by a voluntary contribution, enabled the ſenate to fit out ſuch a powerful armament as ſaved their country. Sabellicus, Hiſt. Rer. Venet. Dec. ii. lib. vi. p. 385. 390. In the war with Ferrara, which began in the year 1472, the ſenate, relying upon the attachment of the citizens to their country, required them to bring all their gold and ſilver plate, and jewels, into the public treaſury, upon promiſe of paying the value of them at the concluſion of the war, with five per cent. of intereſt; and this requiſition was complied with cheerfully. Petr. Cyrnæus de Bello Ferrar. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxi. p. 1016.

NOTE LI. Sect. III. p. 166.

Two facts may be mentioned as proofs of an extraordinary extenſion of the Venetian trade at this period. ——1. There is in Rymer's Great Collection, a ſeries of grants from the kings of England, of various privileges and immunities to Venetian merchants trading in England, as well as ſeveral commercial treaties with the republic, which plainly indicate a conſiderable increaſe of their tranſactions in that country. Theſe are mentioned in their order by Mr. Anderſon, to whoſe patient

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patient induſtry and ſound underſtanding, every perſon engaged in any commercial reſearch muſt have felt himſelf greatly indebted on many occaſions.——2. The eſtabliſhment of a Bank by public authority, the credit of which was founded on that of the ſtate. In an age and nation ſo well acquainted with the advantages which commerce derives from the inſtitution of banks, it is unneceſſary to enumerate them. Mercantile tranſactions muſt have been numerous and extenſive before the utility of ſuch an inſtitution could be fully perceived, or the principles of trade could be ſo fully underſtood as to form the regulations proper for conducting it with ſucceſs. Venice may boaſt of having given the firſt example to Europe of an eſtabliſhment altogether unknown to the ancients, and which is the pride of the modern commercial ſyſtem. The conſtitution of the Bank of Venice was originally founded on ſuch juſt principles, that it has ſerved as a model in the eſtabliſhment of banks in other countries, and the adminiſtration of its affairs has been conducted with ſo much integrity, that its credit has never been ſhaken. I cannot ſpecify the preciſe year in which the Bank of Venice was eſtabliſhed by a law of the State. Anderſon ſuppoſes it to have been A. D. 1157. Chron. Deduct. vol. i. p. 84. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part II. vol. ii. p. 768. part III. vol. ii. p. 892.

NOTE LII. Sect. III. p. 167.

An Italian author of good credit, and a diligent inquirer into the ancient hiſtory of its different governments, affirms, that if the ſeveral States which traded in

in the Mediterranean had united together, Venice alone would have been ſuperior to them all, in naval power, and in extent of commerce. Denina Revolutions d'Italie traduits par l'Abbé Jardin, lib. xviii. c. 6. tom. vi. p. 339. About the year 1420, the Doge Mocenigo gives a view of the naval force of the republic, which confirms this deciſion of Denina. At that time it conſiſted of three thouſand trading veſſels, of various dimenſions, on board which were employed ſeventeen thouſand ſailors; of three hundred ſhips of greater force, manned by eight thouſand ſailors; and of forty-five large galeaſſes, or carracks, navigated by eleven thouſand ſailors. In public and private arſenals ſixteen thouſand carpenters were employed. Mar. Sanuto Vite de Duchi di Venezia, ap. Mur. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxii. p. 959.

NOTE LIII. Sect. III. p. 187.

When we take a view of the form and poſition of the habitable parts of Aſia and Africa, we will ſee good reaſons for conſidering the camel as the moſt uſeful of all the animals over which the inhabitants of theſe great continents have acquired dominion. In both, ſome of the moſt fertile diſtricts are ſeparated from each other by ſuch extenſive tracts of barren ſands, the ſeats of deſolation and drought, as ſeem to exclude the poſſibility of communication between them. But as the ocean, which appears, at firſt view, to be placed as an inſuperable barrier between different regions of the earth, has been rendered, by navigation, ſubſervient to their mutual intercourſe; ſo, by means of the camel, which

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which the Arabians emphatically call *The Ship of the Deſert*, the moſt dreary waſtes are traverſed, and the nations which they disjoin are enabled to trade with one another. Thoſe painful journies, impracticable by any other animal, the camel performs with aſtoniſhing diſpatch. Under heavy burdens of ſix, ſeven, and eight hundred weight, they can continue their march during a long period of time, with little food or reſt, and ſometimes without taſting water for eight or nine days. By the wiſe œconomy of Providence, the camel ſeems formed of purpoſe to be the beaſt of burden in thoſe regions where he is placed, and where his ſervice is moſt wanted. In all the diſtricts of Aſia and Africa, where deſerts are moſt frequent and extenſive, the camel abounds. This is his proper ſtation, and beyond this the ſphere of his activity does not extend far. He dreads alike the exceſſes of heat and of cold, and does not agree even with the mild climate of our temperate zone. As the firſt trade in Indian commodities, of which we have any authentic account, was carried on by means of camels, Geneſis, xxxvii. 25, and as it is by employing them that the conveyance of theſe commodities has been ſo widely extended over Aſia and Africa, the particulars which I have mentioned concerning this ſingular animal appeared to me neceſſary towards illuſtrating this part of my ſubject. If any of my readers deſire more full information, and wiſh to know how the ingenuity and art of man have ſeconded the intentions of Nature, in training the camel, from his birth, for that life of exertion and hardſhip to which he is deſtined, he may conſult Hiſtoire Naturelle, by M. le Comte de Buffon, artic. *Chameau et Dromedaire*, one of the moſt eloquent, and,

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as far as I can judge from examining the authorities which he has quoted, one of the moſt accurate, deſcriptions given by that celebrated writer. M. Volney, whoſe accuracy is well known, gives a deſcription of the manner in which the camel performs its journeys, which may be agreeable to ſome of my readers. "In "travelling through the deſert, camels are chiefly "employed, becauſe they conſume little, and carry a "great load. His ordinary burden is about ſeven "hundred and fifty pounds; his food, whatever is "given him, ſtraw, thiſtles, the ſtones of dates, beans, "barley, &c. With a pound of food a day, and as "much water, he will travel for weeks. In the jour-"ney from Cairo to Suez, which is forty or forty-ſix "hours, they neither eat nor drink; but theſe long "faſts, if often repeated, wear them out. Their "uſual rate of travelling is very ſlow, hardly above "two miles an hour; it is vain to puſh them, they "will not quicken their pace, but, if allowed ſome "ſhort reſt, they will travel fifteen or eighteen hours "a-day." Voyage, tom. ii. p. 383.

NOTE LIV. SECT. III. p. 189.

IN order to give an adequate idea of the extenſive circulation of Indian commodities by land-carriage, it would be neceſſary to trace the route, and to eſtimate the number, of the various caravans by which they are conveyed. Could this be executed with accuracy, it would be a curious ſubject of geographical reſearch, as well as a valuable addition to commercial hiſtory. Though it is inconſiſtent with the brevity which I have

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uniformly ſtudied in conducting this Diſquiſition, to enter into a detail of ſo great length, it may be proper here, for illuſtrating this part of my ſubject, to take ſuch a view of two caravans which viſit Mecca, as may enable my readers to eſtimate more juſtly the magnitude of their commercial tranſactions. The firſt is the caravan which takes its departure from Cairo in Egypt, and the other from Damaſcus in Syria; and I ſelect theſe, both becauſe they are the moſt conſiderable, and becauſe they are deſcribed by authors of undoubted credit, who had the beſt opportunities of receiving full information concerning them. The former is compoſed not only of pilgrims from every part of Egypt, but of thoſe which arrive from all the ſmall Mahomedan ſtates on the African coaſt of the Mediterranean, from the empire of Morocco, and even from the Negroe kingdoms on the Atlantic. When aſſembled, the caravan conſiſts at leaſt of fifty thouſand perſons, and the number of camels employed in carrying water, proviſions, and merchandize, is ſtill greater. The journey, which, in going from Cairo, and returning thither, is not completed in leſs than a hundred days, is performed wholly by land; and as the route lies moſtly through ſandy deſerts, or barren uninhabited wilds, which ſeldom afford any ſubſiſtence, and where often no ſources of water can be found, the pilgrims always undergo much fatigue, and ſometimes muſt endure incredible hardſhips. An early and good deſcription of this caravan is publiſhed by Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 202, &c. Maillet has entered into a minute and curious detail with regard to it; Deſcript. de l'Egypte, part ii. p. 212, &c. Pocock has given a route, together with the length of each day's march, which he received from a perſon who

had been fourteen times at Mecca, vol. i. pp. 168. 261, &c.—The caravan from Damascus, composed of pilgrims from almost every province of the Turkish empire, is little inferior to the former in number, and the commerce which it carries on is hardly less valuable. Voyage de Volney, tom. ii. p. 251, &c. Ohsson Tabl. Gener. de l'Empire Othom. III. p. 275, &c. This pilgrimage was performed in the year 1741, by Khojeh Abdulkurreem, whom I formerly mentioned, Note V. p. 343. He gives the usual route from Damascus to Mecca, computed by hours, the common mode of reckoning a journey in the East through countries little frequented. According to the most moderate estimate, the distance between the two cities, by his account, must be above a thousand miles; a great part of the journey is through a desert, and the pilgrims not only endure much fatigue, but are often exposed to great danger from the wild Arabs. Memoirs, p. 114, &c. It is a singular proof of the predatory spirit of the Arabs, that although all their independent tribes are zealous Mahomedans, yet they make no scruple of plundering the caravans of pilgrims, while engaged in performing one of the most indispensable duties of their religion. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the year 1757. Travels through Cyprus, Syria, &c. by Abbé Mariti, vol. ii. p. 117, &c. Engl. Translation. Great as these caravans are, we must not suppose that all the pilgrims who visit Mecca belong to them; such considerable additions are received from the extensive dominions of Persia, from every province of Indostan, and the countries to the East of it, from Abyssinia, from various states on the Southern coast of Africa, and from all parts of Arabia, that when the whole

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whole are aſſembled they have been computed to amount to two hundred thouſand. In ſome years the number is farther increaſed by ſmall bands of pilgrims from ſeveral interior provinces of Africa, the names and ſituations of which are juſt beginning to be known in Europe. For this laſt fact we are indebted to the Aſſociation for promoting the Diſcovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, formed by ſome Britiſh Gentlemen, upon principles ſo liberal, and with views ſo public-ſpirited, as do honour to themſelves and to their country. Proceedings, &c. p. 174.

In the Report of the Committee of the Privy Council on the Slave Trade, other particulars are contained; and it appears that the commerce carried on by caravans in the interior parts of Africa is not only widely extended, but of conſiderable value. Beſides the great caravan which proceeds to Cairo, and is joined by Mahomedan pilgrims from every part of Africa, there are caravans which have no object but commerce, which ſet out from Fez, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and other ſtates on the ſea coaſt, and penetrate far into the interior country. Some of them take no leſs than fifty days to reach the place of their deſtination; and, as the medium of their rate of travelling may be eſtimated at about eighteen miles a-day, the extent of their journey may be eaſily computed. As both the time of their outſet, and their route, are known, they are met by the people of all the countries through which they travel, who trade with them. Indian goods of every kind form a conſiderable article in this traffic, in exchange for which the chief commodity they can give is ſlaves. Part vi.

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As the journeys of the caravans, which are purely commercial, do not commence at ſtated ſeaſons, and their routes vary according to the convenience or fancy of the merchants of whom they are compoſed, a deſcription cannot be given of them with the ſame degree of accuracy as of the great caravans which viſit Mecca. But by attending to the accounts of ſome authors, and the occaſional hints of others, ſufficient information may be gathered to ſatisfy us, that the circulation of Eaſtern goods by theſe caravans is very extenſive. The ſame intercourſe which was anciently kept up by the provinces in the North-eaſt of Aſia with Indoſtan and China, and which I formerly deſcribed, ſtill ſubſiſts. Among all the numerous tribes of Tartars, even of thoſe which retain their paſtoral manners in greateſt purity, the demand for the productions of theſe two countries is very conſiderable. Voyages de Pallas, tom. i. p. 357, &c. tom. ii. p. 422. In order to ſupply them with theſe, caravans ſet out annually from Boghar, (Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 332.) Samarcand, Thibet, and ſeveral other places, and return with large cargoes of Indian and Chineſe goods. But the trade carried on between Ruſſia and China, in this part of Aſia, is by far the moſt extenſive and beſt known. Some connexion of this kind, it is probable, was kept up between them from the earlieſt period, but it increaſed greatly after the interior parts of Ruſſia were rendered more acceſſible by the conqueſts of Zingis Khan and Tamerlane. The commercial nations of Europe were ſo well acquainted with the mode of carrying on this trade, that ſoon after the Portugueſe had opened the communication with the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope, an attempt was made, in order to diminiſh

minish the advantages which they derived from this diſcovery, to prevail on the Ruſſians to convey Indian and Chineſe commodities through the whole extent of their empire, partly by land-carriage and partly by means of navigable rivers, to ſome port on the Baltic, from which they might be diſtributed through every part of Europe. Ramuſio Raccolto da Viaggi, vol. i. p. 374. B. Hiſt. du Commerce de la Ruſſie, par M. Schreder, tom. i. p. 13, 14. This ſcheme, too great for the monarch then on the throne of Ruſſia to carry into execution, was rendered practicable by the conqueſts of Ivan Baſilowitz, and the genius of Peter the Great. Though the capitals of the two empires were ſituated at the immenſe diſtance of ſix thouſand three hundred and ſeventy-eight miles from each other, and the route lay for above four hundred miles through an uninhabited deſert, (Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 167.) caravans travelled from the one to the other. But though it had been ſtipulated, when this intercourſe was eſtabliſhed, that the number of perſons in each caravan ſhould not exceed two hundred, and though they were ſhut up within the walls of a Caravanſerai during the ſhort time they were ſuffered to remain in Pekin, and were allowed to deal only with a few merchants, to whom a monopoly of the trade with them had been granted; yet, notwithſtanding all theſe reſtraints and precautions, the jealous vigilance with which the Chineſe government excludes foreigners from a free intercourſe with its ſubjects, was alarmed, and the admiſſion of the Ruſſian caravans into the empire was ſoon prohibited. After various negotiations, an expedient was at length deviſed, by which the advantages of mutual commerce were ſecured, without infringing the cau-

tious arrangements of Chineſe policy. On the boundary of the two empires, two ſmall towns were built almoſt contiguous, Kiachta inhabited by Ruſſians, and Maimatſchin by Chineſe. To theſe all the marketable productions of their reſpective countries are brought by the ſubjects of each empire; and the furs, the linen and woollen cloth, the leather, the glaſs, &c. of Ruſſia, are exchanged for the ſilk, the cotton, the tea, the rice, the toys, &c. of China. By ſome well-judged conceſſions of the ſovereign now ſeated on the throne of Ruſſia, whoſe enlarged mind is ſuperior to the illiberal maxims of many of her predeceſſors, this trade is rendered ſo flouriſhing, that its amount annually is not leſs than eight hundred thouſand pounds ſterling, and it is the only trade which China carries on almoſt entirely by barter. Mr. Coxe, in his account of the Ruſſian diſcoveries, has collected, with his uſual attention and diſcernment, every thing relative to this branch of trade, the nature and extent of which were little known in Europe. Part ii. chap. ii, iii, iv. Nor is Kiachta the only place where Ruſſia receives Chineſe and Indian commodities. A conſiderably ſupply of both is brought by caravans of independent Tartars to Orenburg, on the river Jaik; Voyage de Pallas, tom. i. p. 355, &c. to Troitzkaia, on the river Oui, and to other places which I might mention. I have entered into this long detail concerning the mode in which the productions in India and China are circulated through Ruſſia, as it affords the moſt ſtriking inſtance, I know, of the great extent to which valuable commodities may be conveyed by land-carriage.

NOTE

NOTE LV. Sect. IV. p. 194.

The only voyage of discovery in the Atlantic Ocean towards the South, by any of the ancient commercial states in the Mediterranean, is that of Hanno, undertaken by order of the republic of Carthage. As the situation of that city, so much nearer the Straits than Tyre, Alexandria, and the other seats of ancient trade which have been mentioned, gave it more immediate access to the ocean; that circumstance, together with the various settlements which the Carthaginians had made in different provinces of Spain, naturally suggested to them this enterprise, and afforded them the prospect of considerable advantages from its success. The voyage of Hanno, instead of invalidating, seems to confirm the justness of the reasons which have been given, why no similar attempt was made by the other commercial states in the Mediterranean.

NOTE LVI. Sect. IV. p. 195.

Though the intelligent authors whom I have quoted considered this voyage of the Phenicians as fabulous, Herodotus mentions a circumstance concerning it, which seems to prove that it had really been performed. "The Phenicians," says he, "affirmed that, in sailing round Africa, they had the sun on their right "hand, which to me appears not to be credible, "though it may be deemed so by others." Lib. iv. c. 42. This, it is certain, must have happened, if they really

really accomplished such a voyage. The science of astronomy, however, was in that early period so imperfect, that it was by experience only that the Phenicians could come at the knowledge of this fact; they durst not, without this, have ventured to assert what would have appeared to be an improbable fiction. Even after what they related, Herodotus disbelieved it.

NOTE LVII. Sect. IV. p. 205.

Notwithstanding this increasing demand for the productions of India, it is remarkable, that during the sixteenth century some commodities which are now the chief articles of importation from the East, were either altogether unknown, or of little account. Tea, the importation of which, at present, far exceeds that of any other production of the East, has not been in general use, in any country of Europe, a full century; and yet, during that short period, from some singular caprice of taste, or power of fashion, the infusion of a leaf brought from the farthest extremity of the earth, of which it is perhaps the highest praise to say that it is innoxious, has become almost a necessary of life in several parts of Europe, and the passion for it descends from the most elevated to the lowest orders in society. In 1785 it was computed that the whole quantity of tea imported into Europe from China was about nineteen millions of pounds, of which it is conjectured that twelve millions were consumed in Great Britain and the dominions depending upon it. Dodsley's Annual Register for 1784 and 1785, p. 156. In 1789 twenty-one millions of pounds were imported. The porcelain of

of China, now as common in many parts of Europe as if it were of domestic manufacture, was not known to the ancients. Marco Polo is the first among the moderns who mentions it. The Portuguese began to import it not long after their first voyage to China, A. D. 1517; but it was a considerable time before the use of it became extensive.

NOTE LVIII. p. 230.

According to all the writers of antiquity, the Indians are said to be divided into seven tribes or casts. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C. &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153, &c. Arrian. Indic. c. 10. They were led into this error, it is probable, by considering some of the subdivisions of the casts, as if they had been a distinct independent order. But that there were no more than four original casts, we learn from the concurrent testimony of the best informed modern travellers. A most distinct account of these we have in "La Porte "Ouverte, ou la vraye Representation de la Vie, "des Mœurs, de la Religion, et du Service des Bra"mines, qui demeurent sur les Costes de Choromandel," &c. This was compiled before the middle of last century, by Abraham Roger, chaplain of the Dutch factory at Pullicate. By gaining the confidence of an intelligent Brahmin, he acquired information concerning the manners and religion of the Indians, more authentic and extensive than was known to Europeans prior to the late translations from the Sanskreet language. I mention this book, because it seems to be less known than it deserves to be. These remains now no doubt with

with respect either to the number or the functions of the casts, as both are ascertained from the most ancient and sacred books of the Hinddos, and confirmed by the accounts of their own institutions, given by Brahmins eminent for their learning. According to them, the different casts proceeded from Brahma, the immediate agent of the creation under the Supreme Power, in the following manner, which establishes both the rank which they were to hold, and the office which they were required to perform.

The *Brahmin*, from the mouth (wisdom): To pray, to read, to instruct.

The *Chehterre*, from the arms (strength): To draw the bow, to fight, to govern.

The *Bice*, from the belly or thighs (nourishment): To provide the necessaries of life by agriculture and traffic.

The *Sooder*, from the feet (subjection): To labour, to serve.

The prescribed occupations of all these classes are essential in a well-regulated state. Subordinate to them is a fifth, or adventitious class, denominated *Burrun Sunker*, supposed to be the offspring of an unlawful union between persons of different casts. These are mostly dealers in petty articles of retail trade. Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xlvi. and xcix. This adventitious cast is not mentioned, as far as I know, by any European author. The distinction was too nice to be observed by them, and they seem to consider the members of this cast as belonging to the Sooder.

Besides

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Beſides theſe acknowledged caſts, there is a race of unhappy men, denominated, on the Coromandel coaſt, *Pariars*, and, in other parts of India, *Chandalas*. Theſe are out-caſts from their original order, who, by their miſconduct, have forfeited all the privileges of it. Their condition is, undoubtedly, the loweſt degradation of human nature. No perſon of any caſt will have the leaſt communication with them. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 55, 56. If a Pariar approach a *Nayr*, *i. e.* a warrior of high caſt, on the Malabar coaſt, he may put him to death with impunity. Water or milk are conſidered as defiled even by their ſhadow paſſing over them, and cannot be uſed until they are purified. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 243. It is almoſt impoſſible for words to expreſs the ſenſation of vileneſs that the name of Pariar or Chandala conveys to the mind of a Hindoo. Every Hindoo who violates the rules or inſtitutions of his caſt, ſinks into this degraded ſituation. This it is which renders Hindoos ſo reſolute in adhering to the inſtitutions of their tribe, becauſe the loſs of caſt is, to them, the loſs of all human comfort and reſpectability; and is a puniſhment, beyond compariſon, more ſevere than excommunication in the moſt triumphant period of Papal power.

The four original caſts are named, and their functions deſcribed in the Mahabarat, the moſt ancient book of the Hindoos, and of higher authority than any with which Europeans are hitherto acquainted. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 130. The ſame diſtinction of caſts was known to the author of Heeto-pades, another work of conſiderable antiquity, tranſlated from the Sanſkreet, p. 251.

The

The mention of one circumſtance reſpecting the diſtinction of caſts has been omitted in the text. Though the line of ſeparation be ſo drawn, as to render the aſcent from an inferior to a higher caſt abſolutely impoſſible, and it would be regarded as a moſt enormous impiety, if one in a lower order ſhould preſume to perform any function belonging to thoſe of a ſuperior caſt; yet, in certain caſes, the Pundits declare it to be lawful for perſons of a high claſs to exerciſe ſome of the occupations allotted to a claſs below their own, without loſing their caſt by doing ſo. Pref. of Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 100. Accordingly we find Brahmins employed in the ſervice of their princes, not only as miniſters of ſtate, Orme's Fragments, p. 207, but in ſubordinate ſtations. Moſt of the officers of high rank in the army of Sevagi, the founder of the Mahratta ſtate, were Brahmins, and ſome of them Pundits or learned Brahmins. Ibid. p. 97. Hurry Punt and Purſeram Bhow, who commanded the Mahratta forces, which acted in conjunction with the army of Lord Cornwallis againſt Tippoo Saib, were Brahmins. Many Seapoys in the ſervice of the Eaſt India Company, particularly in the Bengal preſidency, are of the Brahmin caſt.

Another fact concerning the caſts deſerves notice. An immenſe number of pilgrims, amounting, in ſome years, to more than 150,000, viſit the Pagoda of Jaggernaut in Oriſſa, (one of the moſt ancient and moſt revered places of Hindoo worſhip,) at the time of the annual feſtival in honour of the deity to whom the temple is conſecrated. The members of all the four caſts are allowed promiſcuouſly to approach the altar of

of the idol, and ſeating themſelves without diſtinction, eat indiſcriminate of the ſame food. This ſeems to indicate ſome remembrance of a ſtate prior to the inſtitution of caſts, when all men were conſidered as equal. I have not ſuch information as enables me to account for a practice ſo repugnant to the firſt ideas and principles of the Hindoos, either ſacred or civil. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 102. Tavernier, book ii. c. 9. Anquetil. Diſc. Prelim. p. 81. Sketches, p. 96.

Some of my readers muſt have obſerved, that I have not mentioned the numerous orders of Indian devotees, to all of whom European writers give the appellation of *Faquirs*; a name by which the Mahomedans diſtinguiſh fanatical monks of their own religion. The light in which I have viewed the religious inſtitutions of the Hindoos, did not render it neceſſary that I ſhould conſider the Indian Faquirs particularly. Their number, the rigour of their mortifications, the excruciating penances which they voluntarily undergo, and the high opinion which the people entertain of their ſanctity, have ſtruck all travellers who have viſited India, and their deſcriptions of them are well known. The powerful influence of enthuſiaſm, the love of diſtinction, and the deſire of obtaining ſome portion of that reverence and thoſe honours which the Brahmins are born to enjoy, may account for all the extraordinary things which they do and ſuffer. One particular concerning them merits notice. This order of devotees appears to have been very ancient in India. The deſcription of the *Germani*, which Strabo takes from Megaſthenes, applies, almoſt in every circumſtance, to the modern Faquirs. Lib. xv. p. 1040. B.

NOTE

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NOTE LIX. p. 236.

WHAT I have aſſerted in the text is in general well-founded. It is the opinion, however, of gentlemen who have ſeen much of India, and who obſerved all they ſaw with a diſcerning eye, that the conqueſts both of the Mahomedans and of the Europeans have had ſome effect upon the manners and cuſtoms of the natives. They imagine that the dreſs which the Hindoos now wear, the turban, the jummah, and long drawers, is an imitation of that worn by their Mahomedan conquerors. The ancient dreſs of the Indians, as deſcribed by Arrian, Hiſt. Indic. c. 16. was a muſlin cloth thrown looſely about their ſhoulders, a muſlin ſhirt reaching to the middle of the leg, and their beards were dyed various colours; which is near the ſame with that uſed at preſent. The cuſtom of ſecluding women, and the ſtrictneſs with which they are confined, is likewiſe ſuppoſed to have been introduced by the Mahomedans. This ſuppoſition is, in ſome meaſure confirmed by the drama of Sacontala, tranſlated from the Sanſkreet. In that play, ſeveral female characters are introduced, who mingle in ſociety and converſe as freely with men, as women are accuſtomed to do in Europe. The author, we may preſume, deſcribes the manners, and adheres to the cuſtoms of his own age. But while I mention this remark, it is proper, likewiſe, to obſerve, that, from a paſſage in Strabo, there is reaſon to think, that, in the age of Alexander the Great, women in India were guarded with the ſame jealous attention as at preſent.

"When their princes," (says he, copying Megasthenes,) "set out upon a public hunt, they are accompanied by a number of their women, but along the road in which they travel, ropes are stretched on each side, and if any man approach near to them he is instantly put to death." Lib xv. p. 1037. A. In some parts of India, where the original manners of the people may be supposed to subsist in greatest purity, particularly in the high country towards the sources of the Indus, women of rank reside in private apartments, secluded from society. Forster's Travels, vol. i. p. 228. Women even of the Brahmin cast appear in the streets without a veil; and it is only, as I am informed, in the houses of persons of high rank or great opulence that a distinct quarter or haram is allotted to the women. The influence of European manners begins to be apparent among the Hindoos who reside in the town of Calcutta. Some of them drive about in English chariots, sit upon chairs, and furnish their houses with mirrors. Many circumstances might be mentioned, were this the proper place, which, it is probable, will contribute to the progress of this spirit of imitation.

NOTE LX. p. 236.

It is amusing to observe how exactly the ideas of an intelligent Asiatic coincide with those of the Europeans on this subject. "In reflecting," says he, "upon the poverty of Turan [the countries beyond the Oxus] and Arabia, I was at first at a loss to assign a reason why these countries have never been

"able to retain wealth, whilſt, on the contrary, it is "daily increaſing in Indoſtan. Timour carried into "Turan the riches of Turkey, Perſia, and Indoſtan; "but they are all diſſipated; and, during the reigns of "the four firſt Caliphs, Turkey, Perſia, part of Ara"bia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Spain, were their tributa"ries; but ſtill they were not rich. It is evident, "then, that this diſſipation of the riches of a ſtate, "muſt have happened either from extraordinary drains, "or from ſome defect in the government. Indoſtan "has been frequently plundered by foreign invaders, "and not one of its kings ever gained for it any ac"quiſition of wealth: neither has the country many "mines of gold and ſilver, and yet Indoſtan abounds "in money and every other kind of wealth. The "abundance of ſpecie is undoubtedly owing to the "large importation of gold and ſilver in the ſhips of "Europe, and other nations, many of whom bring "ready money in exchange for the manufactures and "natural productions of the country. If this is not "the cauſe of the proſperous ſtate of Indoſtan, it "muſt be owing to the peculiar bleſſing of God." Memoirs of Khojeh Abdul-kurreem, a Cashmerian of diſtinction, p. 42.

NOTE LXI. p. 243.

That the monarchs of India were the ſole proprietors of land, is aſſerted in moſt explicit terms by the ancients. The people (ſay they) pay a land-tax to their kings, becauſe the whole kingdom is regal property. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153.

p. 153. This was not peculiar to India. In all the great monarchies of the East, the ſole property of land ſeems to be veſted in the ſovereign as lord paramount. According to Chardin, this is the ſtate of property in Perſia, and lands were let by the monarch to the farmers who cultivated them, on conditions nearly reſembling thoſe granted to the Indian Ryots. Voyages, tom. iii. p. 339, &c. 4to. M. Volney gives a ſimilar account of the tenure by which lands are held in one of the great provinces of the Turkiſh empire. Voy. en Syrie, &c. tom. ii. p. 369, &c. The preciſe mode, however, in which the Ryots of Indoſtan held their poſſeſſions, is a circumſtance in its ancient political conſtitution, with reſpect to which gentlemen of ſuperior diſcernment, who have reſided long in the country, and filled ſome of the higheſt ſtations in government, have formed very different opinions. Some have imagined that grants of land were made by the ſovereign to villages or ſmall communities, the inhabitants of which, under the direction of their own chiefs or heads-men, laboured it in common, and divided the produce of it among them in certain proportions. Deſcript. de l'Inde, par M. Bernouilli, tom. ii. 223, &c. Others maintain, that the property of land has been transferred from the crown to hereditary officers of great eminence and power, denominated *Zemindars*, who collect the rents from the Ryots, and parcel out the lands among them. Others contend, that the office of the Zemindars is temporary and miniſterial, that they are merely collectors of revenue, removeable at pleaſure, and the tenure by which the Ryots hold their poſſeſſions is derived immediately from the ſovereign. This laſt opinion is ſupported with great

ability, by Mr. Grant, in an Inquiry into the Nature of Zemindary tenures in the landed property of Bengal, &c. This question still continues to be agitated in Bengal, and such plausible arguments have been produced in support of the different opinions, that although it be a point extremely interesting, as the future system of British finance in India appears likely to hinge, in an essential degree, upon it, persons well acquainted with the state of India, have not been able to form a final and satisfactory opinion upon this subject. Captain Kirkpatrick's Introd. to the Institutes of Ghazan Khan. New Asiatic Miscell. N° II. p. 130. Though the sentiments of the Committee of Revenue, composed of persons eminent for their abilities, lean to a conclusion against the hereditary right of the Zemindars in the soil, yet the Supreme Council, in the year 1786, declined, for good reasons, to give any decisive judgment on a subject of such magnitude. This note was sent to the press before I had it in my power to peruse Mr. Rouse's ingenious and instructive Dissertation concerning the landed property of Bengal. In it he adopts an opinion contrary to that of Mr. Grant, and maintains, with that candour and liberality of sentiment which are always conspicuous where there is no other object in view but the discovery of truth, that the Zemindars of Bengal possess their landed property by hereditary right. Were I possessed of such knowledge, either of the state of India, or of the system of administration established there, as would be requisite for comparing these different theories, and determining which of them merits the preference, the subject of my researches does not render it necessary to enter

enter into such a disquisition. I imagine, however, that the state of landed property in India might be greatly illustrated by an accurate comparison of it with the nature of feudal tenures; and I apprehend that there might be traced there a succession of changes taking place, in much the same order as has been observed in Europe, from which it might appear, that the possession of land was granted at first during pleasure, afterwards for life, and at length became perpetual and hereditary property. But even under this last form, when land is acquired either by purchase or inheritance, the manner in which the right of property is confirmed and rendered complete, in Europe by a Charter, in India by a *Sunnud* from the sovereign, seems to point out what was its original state. According to each of the theories which I have mentioned, the tenure and condition of the Ryots nearly resemble the description which I have given of them. Their state, we learn from the accounts of intelligent observers, is as happy and independant as falls to the lot of any race of men employed in the cultivation of the earth. The ancient Greek and Roman writers, whose acquaintance with the interior parts of India was very imperfect, represent the fourth part of the annual produce of land as the general average of rent paid to the sovereign. Upon the authority of a popular author who flourished in India prior to the Christian æra, we may conclude that a sixth part of the people's income was, in his time, the usual portion of the sovereign. Sacontala, Act V. B. 53. It is now known that what the sovereign receives from land varies greatly in different parts of the country, and is regulated by the fertility or barrenness

of the soil, the nature of the climate, the abundance or scarcity of water, and many other obvious circumstances. By the account given of it, I should imagine that, in some districts, it has been raised beyond its due proportion. One circumstance with respect to the administration of revenue in Bengal merits notice, as it redounds to the honour of the Emperor Akber, the wisdom of whose government I have often had occasion to celebrate. A general and regular assessment of revenue in Bengal was formed in his reign. All the lands were then valued, and the rent of each inhabitant and of each village ascertained. A regular gradation of accounts was established. The rents of the different inhabitants who lived in one neighbourhood being collected together, formed the account of a village; the rents of several villages being next collected into one view, formed the accounts of a larger portion of land. The aggregate of these accounts exhibited the rent of a district, and the sum total of the rents of all the districts in Bengal, formed the account of the revenue of the whole province. From the reign of Akber to the government of Jaffeer Ali Cawn, A. D. 1757, the annual amount of revenue, and the modes of levying it, continued with little variation. But in order to raise the sum which he had stipulated to pay the English on his elevation, he departed from the wise arrangements of Akber; many new modes of assessment were introduced, and exactions multiplied.

NOTE LXII. p. 245.

I SHALL mention only one instance of their attention to this useful regulation of police. Lahore, in the

Bahjah, is distant from Agra, the ancient capital of Indostan, five hundred miles. Along each side of the road between these two great cities, there is planted a continued row of shady trees, forming an avenue, to which (whether we consider its extent, its beauty, or utility in a hot climate) there is nothing similar in any country. Rennell's Memoir, p. 69.

NOTE LXIII. p. 250.

We cannot place the equitable and mild government of Akber in a point of view more advantageous, than by contrasting it with the conduct of other Mahomedan princes. In no country did this contrast ever appear more striking than in India. In the thousandth year of the Christian æra, Mahmud of Ghazna, to whose dominion were subjected the same countries which formed the ancient kingdom of Bactria, invaded Indostan. Every step of his progress in it was marked with blood and desolation. The most celebrated pagodas, the ancient monuments of Hindoo devotion and magnificence, were destroyed, the ministers of religion were massacred, and with undistinguishing ferocity the country was laid waste, and the cities were plundered and burnt. About four hundred years after, Mahmud, Timur, or Tamerlane, a conqueror of higher fame, turned his irresistible arms against Indostan; and, though born in an age more improved, he not only equalled, but often so far surpassed the cruel deeds of Mahmud, as to be justly branded with the odious name of the "Destroy-"ing Prince," which was given to him by the Hindoos, the undeserving victims of his rage. A rapid,

but striking description of their devastations may be found in Mr. Orme's Dissertation on the Establishments made by the Mahomedan conquerors in Indostan. A more full account of them is given by Mr. Gibbon, vol. v. p. 646. vol. vi. p. 339, &c. The arrogant contempt with which bigotted Mahomedans view all the nations who have not embraced the religion of the prophet, will account for the unrelenting rigour of Mahmud and Timur towards the Hindoos, and greatly enhances the merit of the tolerant spirit and moderation with which Akber governed his subjects. What impression the mild administration of Akber made upon the Hindoos, we learn from a beautiful letter of Jeswant Sing, Rajah of Joudpore, to Aurengzebe, his fanatical and persecuting successor. "Your royal ancestor, Akber, whose throne is now in heaven, conducted the affairs of this empire in equity and firm security for the space of fifty-two years, preserving every tribe of men in ease and happiness; whether they were followers of Jesus, or of Moses, of David, or of Mahomed; were they Brahmins, were they of the sect of Dharisns, which denies the eternity of matter, or of that which ascribes the existence of the world to chance, they all equally enjoyed his countenance and favour; insomuch that his people, in gratitude for the indiscriminate protection which he afforded them, distinguished him by the appellation of *Jugut Gooru*, Guardian of Mankind. If your Majesty places any faith in those books, by distinction called divine, you will there be instructed, that God is the God of all mankind, not the God of Mahomedans alone. The Pagan and the Musulman are equally in his presence. Distinctions of colours are

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of his ordination. It is He who gives exiſtence. In your temples, to his Name, the voice is raiſed in prayer; in a houſe of images, where the bell is ſhaken, ſtill He is the object of adoration. To vilify the religion and cuſtoms of other men, is to ſet at naught the pleaſure of the Almighty. When we deface a picture, we naturally incur the reſentment of the painter; and juſtly has the poet ſaid, "Preſume not to arraign or to ſcrutinize the various works of Power Divine." For this valuable communication we are indebted to Mr. Orme. Fragments, notes, p. xcvii. I have been aſſured by a gentleman who has read this letter in the original, that the tranſlation is not only faithful but elegant.

NOTE LXIV. p. 262.

I HAVE not attempted a deſcription of any ſubterraneous excavations but thoſe of Elephanta, becauſe none of them have been ſo often viſited, or ſo carefully inſpected. In ſeveral parts of India, there are, however, ſtupendous works of a ſimilar nature. The extent and magnificence of the excavations in the iſland of Salſetta are ſuch, that the artiſt employed by Governor Boon to make drawings of them, aſſerted that it would require the labour of forty thouſand men for forty years to finiſh them. Archæologia, vol. vii, p. 336. Look at this mode of eſtimation may be, it conveys an idea of the impreſſion which the view of them made upon his mind. The Pagodas of Ellore, eighteen miles from Aurungabad, are likewiſe hewn out of the ſolid rock, and if they do not equal thoſe of Elephanta and Salſetta

ſetta in magnitude, they ſurpaſs them far in their extent and number. M. Thevenot, who firſt gave any deſcription of theſe ſingular manſions, aſſerts, that for above two leagues all around the mountain nothing is to be ſeen but Pagodas. Voy. part iii. ch. 44. They were examined at greater leiſure and with more attention by M. Anquetil du Perron; but as his long deſcription of them is not accompanied with any plan or drawing, I cannot convey a diſtinct idea of the whole. It is evident, however, that they are the works of a powerful people, and among the innumerable figures in ſculpture with which the walls are covered, all the preſent objects of Hindoo worſhip may be diſtinguiſhed. Zend-aveſta. Diſc. Prelim. p. 233. There are remarkable excavations in a Mountain at Mavalipuram near Sadras. This mountain is well known on the Coromandel coaſt by the name of the *Seven Pagodas*. A good deſcription of the works there which are magnificent and of high antiquity is given. Aſiat. Reſearches, vol. i. p. 145, &c. Many other inſtances of ſimilar works might be produced if it were neceſſary. What I have aſſerted, p. 282. concerning the elegance of ſome of the ornaments in Indian buildings, is confirmed by Colonel Call, chief engineer at Madras, who urges this as a proof of the early and high civilization of the Indians. "It may ſafely be pronounced," ſays he, "that no part of the world has "more marks of antiquity for arts, ſciences, and civilization, than the peninſula of India, from the "Ganges to Cape Comorin. I think the carvings on "ſome of the Pagodas and Choultries, as well as the "grandeur of the work, exceeds any thing executed "now-a-days, not only for the delicacy of the chiſel, "but

" but the expence or conſtruction, conſidering, in many " inſtances, to what diſtances the component parts " were carried, and to what heights raiſed." Philoſophical Tranſactions, vol. lxii, p. 354. I am happy to find my idea, that the firſt temples erected by the Hindoos were formed upon the model of thoſe caverns in which the rites of religion were originally celebrated, confirmed and more fully unfolded by Mr. Hodges. In a ſhort diſſertation on the primitive ſtandard, or prototype of the different ſtyles of architecture, viz. the Egyptian, Hindoo, Mooriſh, Gothic, and Chineſe, he has examined and illuſtrated that curious ſubject with great ingenuity. Travels in India, p. 63—77.

NOTE LXV. p. 267.

INDIA, ſays Strabo, produces a variety of ſubſtances which dye the moſt admirable colours. That the *Indicum*, which produced the beautiful blue colour, is the ſame with the *Indigo* of the moderns, we may conclude not only from the reſemblance of the name, and the ſimilarity of the effects, but from the deſcription given by Pliny in the paſſage which I have quoted in the text. He knew that it was a preparation of a vegetable ſubſtance, though he was ill-informed both concerning the plant itſelf, and the proceſs by which it was fitted for uſe, which will not appear ſurpriſing, when we recollect the account formerly given of the ſtrange ignorance of the ancients with reſpect to the origin and preparation of ſilk. From the colour of Indigo, in the form in which it was imported, it is denominated by ſome authors, *Atramentum Indicum*, and

Indicum

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Indicum Nigrum, Salmaſ. Exercit. p. 180, and is mentioned under the laſt of theſe names, among the articles of importation from India. Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 22. The colour of the modern Indigo, when undiluted, reſembles that of the ancient Indicum, being ſo intenſely coloured as to appear black. Delaval's Experim. Inquiry into the Cauſe of the Changes of Colours, Pref. p. xxiii. Indigo is the principal dye-ſtuff uſed by the natives of Sumatra, and is much cultivated in that iſland; but the mode of preparing it differs from that which is common among the people of Indoſtan. Marſden. Hiſt. of Sumatra, p. 77. There has been lately found in the Circar of Rajamundry a new ſpecies of Indigo, denominated the *True Indigo*, which, as it grows wild and in great abundance, promiſes to be a diſcovery of conſiderable uſe. Oriental Repertory, No. I. p. 39, &c. The *Gum Lacca*, uſed in dying a red colour, was likewiſe known to the ancients, and by the ſame name which it now bears. Salmaſ. Exercit. p. 810. This valuable ſubſtance, of ſuch extenſive utility in painting, dying, japanning, varniſhing, and in the manufacture of ſealing-wax, is the production of a very minute inſect. Theſe inſects fix themſelves upon the ſucculent extremities of the branches of certain trees, and are ſoon glued to the place on which they ſettle, by a thick pellucid liquid which exudes from their bodies, the gradual accumulation of which forms a complete cell for each inſect, which is the tomb of the parent, and the birth-place of its offſpring. This glutinous ſubſtance, with which the branches of trees are entirely covered, is the Gum-lacca. An account of its formation, nature, and uſes, is given in the Philoſ. Tranſ. vol. lxxi. part ii. p. 374.

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in a concise, accurate, and satisfactory manner. Some curious observations upon this insect are published by Mr. Roxburgh, who cultivates the study of Natural History in India with great assiduity and success. Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 361. It is remarkable that Ctesias seems to have received an account tolerably distinct of the insect by which the Gum-lacca is produced, and celebrates the beauty of the colour which it dyes. Excerpta ex Indic. ad calc. Herodot. edit. Wesseling, p. 830. *Indian Dyers* was the ancient name of those who dyed either the fine blue or the fine red, which points out the country whence the materials they used were brought. Salmas. ib. p. 810. From their dying cotton-stuffs with different colours, it is evident that the ancient Indians must have made some considerable proficiency in chemical knowledge. Pliny, lib. xxxv. c. ii. § 42. gives an account of this art as far as it was known anciently. It is precisely the same with that now practised in callico-printing.

NOTE LXVI. p. 279.

As Sanskreet literature is altogether a new acquisition to Europe, Baghvat-Geeta, the first translation from that language, having been published so late as A. D. 1785; it is intimately connected with the subject of my inquiries, and may afford entertainment to some of my readers, after having reviewed in the text, with a greater degree of critical attention, the two Sanskreet works most worthy of notice, to give here a succinct account of other compositions in that tongue with which we have been made acquainted. The extensive

use

uſe of the Sanſkreet language is a circumſtance which merits particular attention. "The grand ſource of "Indian literature," (ſays Mr. Halhed, the firſt Engliſhman who acquired the knowledge of Sanſkreet,) "the parent of almoſt every dialect from the Perſian "gulf to the China ſeas, is the Sanſkreet, a language "of the moſt venerable and unfathomable antiquity; "which, although, at preſent, ſhut up in the libraries "of Brahmins, and appropriated ſolely to the records "of their religion, appears to have been current over "moſt of the Oriental world; and traces of its origi- "nal extent may ſtill be diſcovered in almoſt every "diſtrict of Aſia. I have been often aſtoniſhed to find "the ſimilitude of Sanſkreet words with thoſe of Per- "ſian and Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek; and "thoſe not in technical and metaphorical terms, which "the mutuation of refined arts and improved man- "ners might have occaſionally introduced, but in the "ground-work of language, in monoſyllables, in the "names of numbers, and the appellations of ſuch "things as would be firſt diſcriminated on the imme- "diate dawn of civilization. The reſemblance which "may be obſerved in the characters on the medals and "ſignets of various diſtricts of Aſia, the light which "they reciprocally reflect upon each other, and the "general analogy which they all bear to the ſame "grand prototype, afford another ample field for diſcu- "riofity. The coins of Aſſam, Nupaul, Cashmere, "and many other kingdoms, are all ſtamped with "Sanſkreet characters, and moſtly contain allusions to "the old Sanſkreet mythology. The ſame conformity "I have obſerved on the impreſſion of ſeals from "Bootan and Thibet. A collateral inference may

"likewiſe

" likewise be deduced from the peculiar arrangement of " the Sanskreet alphabet, so very different from that of " any other quarter of the world. This extraordinary " mode of combination still exists in the greatest part " of the East, from the Indus to Pegu, in dialects now " apparently unconnected, and in characters com- " pletely dissimilar, and it is a forcible argument that " they are all derived from the same source. Another " channel of speculation presents itself in the names " of persons and places, of titles and dignities, which " are open to general notice, and in which, to the " farthest limits of Asia, may be found manifest traces " of the Sanskreet." Preface to the Grammar of the Bengal language, p. 3. After this curious account of the Sanskreet tongue, I proceed to enumerate the works which have been translated from it, besides the two mentioned in the text.—To Mr. Wilkins we are indebted for *Hito-pades*, or *Amicable Instruction*, in a series of connected fables, interspersed with moral, prudential, and political maxims. This work is in such high esteem throughout the East, that it has been translated into every language spoken there. It did not escape the notice of the Emperor Akbar, attentive to every thing that could contribute to promote useful knowledge. He directed his Vizier, Abul Fazel, to put it into a style suited to all capacities, and to illustrate the obscure passages in it, which he accordingly did, and gave it the title of, *The Criterion of Wisdom*. At length, these fables made their way into Europe, and have been circulated there with additions and alterations, under the names of Pilpay and Æsop. Many of the Sanskreet apologues are ingenious and beautiful, and have been copied or imitated by the fabulists of

other nations. But in ſome of them the characters of the animals introduced are very ill ſuſtained; to deſcribe a tyger as extremely devout, and practiſing charity, and other religious duties, p. 16. or an old mouſe well read in the *Neetee Saſtras*, i. e. Syſtems of morality and policy, p. 24.; a cat reading religious books, p. 35, &c. diſcovers a want of taſte, and an inattention to propriety. Many of the moral ſayings, if conſidered as detached maxims, are founded upon a thorough knowledge of life and manners, and convey inſtruction with elegant ſimplicity. But the attempt of the author to form his work into a connected ſeries of fables, and his mode of interweaving with them ſuch a number of moral reflections in proſe and in verſe, renders the ſtructure of the whole ſo artificial that the peruſal of it becomes often unpleaſant. Akber was ſo ſenſible of this, that, among other inſtructions, he adviſes his Vizier to abridge the long digreſſions in that work. By theſe ſtrictures it is far from my intention to detract in the ſmalleſt degree from the merit of Mr. Wilkins. His country is much indebted to him for having opened a new ſource of ſcience and taſte. The celebrity of the Hectopades, as well as its intrinſic merit, notwithſtanding the defects which I have mentioned, juſtify his choice of it, as a work worthy of being made known to Europe in its original form. From reading this and his other tranſlations, no man will refuſe him the praiſe, to which he modeſtly confines his pretenſions, "of having drawn a picture which "we ſuppoſe to be a true likeneſs, although we are "unacquainted with the original." Pref. p. xiv.—

a. In the firſt Number of the New Aſiatic Miſcellany, we have a tranſlation of a celebrated compoſition in the Eaſt,

kan, known by the title of the *Five Gems*. It conſiſts of ſtanzas by five poets who attended the court of Adiſura, King of Bengal. Some of theſe ſtanzas are ſimple and elegant.—3. An ode tranſlated from Wulli; in which that extravagance of fancy, and thoſe far-fetched and unnatural conceits, which ſo often diſguſt Europeans with the poetical compoſitions of the Eaſt, abound too much. The editor has not informed us to whoſe knowledge of the Sanſkreet we are indebted for theſe two tranſlations.—4. Some original grants of land, of very ancient dates, tranſlated by Mr. Wilkins.

It may ſeem odd, that a charter or legal conveyance of property ſhould be ranked among the literary compoſitions of any people. But ſo widely do the manners of the Hindoos differ from thoſe of Europe, that as our lawyers multiply words and clauſes, in order to render a grant complete, and to guard againſt every thing that may invalidate it, the *Pundits* ſeem to diſpatch the legal part of the deed with brevity, but, in a long preamble and concluſion, make an extraordinary diſplay of their own learning, eloquence, and powers of compoſition, both in proſe and verſe. The preamble to one of theſe deeds is an encomium of the monarch who grants the land, in a bold ſtrain of Eaſtern exaggeration: "When his innumerable army marched, "the heavens were ſo filled with the duſt of their feet "that the birds of the air could reſt upon it."—"His "elephants moved like walking mountains, and the "earth, oppreſſed by their weight, mouldered into duſt." It concludes with denouncing vengeance againſt thoſe who ſhould venture to infringe this grant: "Riches "and the life of man are as tranſient as drops of water "upon the leaf of the lotus. Learning this truth,

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" O man! do not attempt to deprive another of his " property." Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. i. p. 123, &c. The other grant, which appears to be ſtill more ancient, is not leſs remarkable. Both were found engraved on plates of copper. Ib. p. 357, &c.—5. The tranſlation of part of the Shaſter, publiſhed by Colonel Dow, in the year 1768, ought perhaps to have been firſt mentioned. But as this tranſlation was not made by him from the Sanſkreet, but taken from the mouth of a Brahmin, who explained the Shaſter in Perſian, or in the vulgar language of Bengal, it will fall more properly under notice when we come to inquire into the ſtate of ſcience among the Hindoos, than in this place, where we are endeavouring to give ſome idea of their taſte and compoſition.

NOTE LXVII. p. 291.

As many of my readers may be unacquainted with the extravagant length of the four æras or periods of Indian chronology, it may be proper to give an account of them from Mr. Halhed's Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xxxvi.

1. THE *Suttee Jogue* (or age of purity) is ſaid to have laſted three million two hundred thouſand years; and they hold that the life of man was extended in that age to one hundred thouſand years, and that his ſtature was twenty-one cubits.

2. THE *Tirtah Jogue* (in which one third of mankind was corrupted) they ſuppoſe to have conſiſted of two

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million four hundred thouſand years, and that men lived to the age of ten thouſand years.

3. THE *Dwopaar Jogue* (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured one million ſix hundred thouſand years; and the life of man was then reduced to a thouſand years.

4. THE *Collee Jogue* (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather leſſened, for that is the true meaning of *Collee*) is the preſent æra, which they ſuppoſe ordained to ſubſiſt four hundred thouſand years, of which near five thouſand are already paſt; and the life of man in that period is limited to one hundred years.

IF we ſuppoſe the computation of time in the Indian chronology to be made by ſolar or even by lunar years, nothing can be more extravagant in itſelf, or more repugnant to our mode of calculating the duration of the world, founded on ſacred and infallible authority. Some attempts have been made by learned men, particularly by M. Bailly, in a very ingenious diſſertation on that ſubject, to bring the chronology of the Hindoos to accord ſomewhat better with that of the Old Teſtament; but, as I could not explain the principles upon which he founds his concluſions, without entering into long and intricate diſcuſſions foreign from the ſubject of this Diſſertation, and as I cannot aſſent to ſome of his opinions, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied with referring to his Aſtron. Indienne, Diſc. Prelim. p. lxxvii. and leave my readers to judge for themſelves. I am happy to obſerve that a Memoir on the Chronology of the Hindoos will be publiſhed in the Second Volume of the

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Tranſactions of the Society of Bengal, and I hope that ſome learned member of that body will be able, from his acquaintance with the languages and hiſtory of the country, to throw light upon a ſubject which its connection with religion and ſcience renders extremely intereſting. From one circumſtance, however, which merits attention, we may conclude, that the information which we have hitherto received concerning the chronology of the Hindoos is very incorrect. We have, as far as I know, only five original accounts of the different Jogues or æras of the Hindoos. The firſt is given by M. Roger, who received it from the Brahmins on the Coromandel coaſt. According to it, the Suttee Jogue is a period of one million ſeven hundred and twenty-eight thouſand years; the Tirtah Jogue is one million two hundred and ninety-ſix thouſand years; the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years. The duration of the Collee Jogue he does not ſpecify. Porte Ouverte, p. 179. The next is that of M. Bernier, who received it from the Brahmins of Benares. According to him, the duration of the Suttee Jogue was two million five hundred thouſand years; that of the Tirtah Jogue one million two hundred thouſand years; that of the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years. Concerning the period of the Collee Jogue, he, likewiſe, is ſilent. Voyages, tom. ii. p. 160. The third is that of Colonel Dow, according to which the Suttee Jogue is a period of fourteen million of years; the Tirtah Jogue one million eighty thouſand; the Dwapaar Jogue ſeventy-two thouſand; and the Collee Jogue thirty-ſix thouſand years. Hiſt. of Hindoſt. vol. i. p. 2. The fourth account is that of M. Le Gentil, who

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who received it from the Brahmins of the Coromandel coaſt, and as his information was acquired in the ſame part of India, and derived from the ſame ſource with that of M. Roger, it agrees with his in every particular. Mem. de l'Acadom. des Sciences pour 1772, tom. ii. part i. p. 176. The fifth is the account of Mr. Halhed, which I have already given. From this diſcrepancy, not only of the total numbers, but of many of the articles in the different accounts, it is manifeſt that our information concerning Indian chronology is hitherto as uncertain as the whole ſyſtem of it is wild and fabulous. To me it appears highly probable, that when we underſtand more thoroughly the principles upon which the factitious æras or Jogues of the Hindoos have been formed, that we may be more able to reconcile their chronology to the true mode of computing time, founded on the authority of the Old Teſtament; and may likewiſe find reaſon to conclude, that the account given by their aſtronomers of the ſituation of the heavenly bodies at the beginning of the Collee Jogue, is not eſtabliſhed by actual obſervation, but the reſult of a retroſpective calculation. Whoever undertakes to inveſtigate farther the chronology of the Hindoos, will derive great aſſiſtance from a Memoir of Mr. Marſden on that ſubject, in which he has explained the nature of their year, and the ſeveral æras in uſe among them, with much ingenuity and preciſion. Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lxxx. part ii. p. 560.

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NOTE LXVIII. p. 309.

In the public buildings of India, we find proofs and monuments of the proficiency of the Brahmins in ſcience, particularly of their attention to aſtronomical obſervation. Their religion enjoins, that the four ſides of a Pagoda ſhould face the four cardinal points. In order to execute this with accuracy, they take a method deſcribed by M. le Gentil, which diſcovers a conſiderable degree of ſcience. He carefully examined the poſition of one of their Pagodas, and found it to be perfectly exact. Voy. tom. i. p. 133, &c. As ſome of their Pagodas are very ancient, they muſt have early attained ſuch a portion of knowledge as was requiſite for placing them properly. On the ceilings of Choultrys, and other ancient edifices, the twelve ſigns of the zodiac are often delineated; and, from their reſemblance to thoſe which are now univerſally uſed, it is highly probable that the knowledge of theſe arbitrary ſymbols was derived from the Eaſt. Colonel Call has publiſhed a drawing of the ſigns of the zodiac, which he found on the ceiling of a Choultry at Verdapettah, in the Madura country. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lxii. p. 353. I have a drawing of them in my poſſeſſion, differing from his in ſome of the figures, but I cannot ſay in what particular place it was found. Sir Robert Barker deſcribes an obſervatory at Benares, which he viſited A. D. 1772. In it he found inſtruments for aſtronomical obſervation, of very large dimenſions, and conſtructed with great ſkill and ingenuity. Of all theſe he has publiſhed drawings. Phil. Tranſact.

vol.

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vol. lxvii. p. 598. According to traditionary account, this obſervatory was built by the Emperor Akber. The view which Sir Robert took of it was an haſty one. It merits a more attentive inſpection, in order to determine whether it was conſtructed by Akber, or erected in ſome more early period. Sir Robert intimates, that none but Brahmins who underſtood the Sanſkreet, and could conſult the aſtronomical tables written in that language, were capable of calculating eclipſes. P. Tieffenthaler deſcribes, in a very curſory manner, two obſervatories furniſhed with inſtruments of extraordinary magnitude, at Jepour and Ougein, in the country of Malwa. Bernouilli, tom. i. p. 316. 347. But theſe are modern ſtructures.

Since the firſt edition of the Hiſtorical Diſquiſition was publiſhed, the Souriak Seddantam, or, according to a more correct orthography, the Súrya Siddhánta, on the principles of which I had obſerved that all the Indian Aſtronomy is founded, has been diſcovered at Benares by Sir Robert Chambers. He immediately communicated this valuable work to Samuel Davis, Eſq. who has favoured the world with a tranſlation of ſeveral conſiderable extracts from it.

The Súrya Siddhánta is compoſed in the Sanſkreet language, and profeſſes to be a divine revelation, (as Abul Fazel had related, Ayeen Akbery, III. p. 8.) communicated to mankind, more than two millions of years ago, towards the cloſe of the Sutty or Satya Jogue, the firſt of the four fabulous ages into which the Hindoo Mythologiſts divide the period during

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which they ſuppoſe the world to have exiſted. But when this accompaniment of fiction and extravagance is removed, there is left behind a very rational and elaborate ſyſtem of aſtronomical calculation. From this Mr. Davis has ſelected what relates to the calculation of Eclipſes, and has illuſtrated it with great ingenuity. The manner in which that ſubject is treated has ſo cloſe an affinity to the methods formerly brought from India, and of which I have given ſome account, as to confirm ſtrongly the opinion that the Súrya Siddhánta is the ſource from which all the others are derived. How far the real date of this work may be aſcertained from the rules and tables which it contains, will be more clearly eſtabliſhed when a tranſlation of the whole is publiſhed. In the mean time it is evident, that what is already known with reſpect to theſe rules and tables, is extremely favourable to the hypotheſis which aſcribes a very high antiquity to the Aſtronomy of the Brahmins.

The circumſtance, perhaps, moſt worthy of attention in the Extracts now referred to, is the ſyſtem of Trigonometry included in the Aſtronomical rules of the Súrya Siddhánta. Aſiat. Reſearch. ii. p. 245. 249. It may be ſhewn that this ſyſtem is founded on certain Geometrical Theorems, which, though modern Mathematicians be well acquainted with, were certainly unknown to Ptolemy and the Greek Geometricians.

It is with pleaſure, too, we obſerve, that Mr. Davis has in his poſſeſſion ſeveral other ancient books of Hindoo Aſtronomy, and that there is reaſon to expect

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expect from him a tranſlation of the whole Súrya Siddhánta.

It muſt be added, that we alſo learn from the ſecond volume of the Aſiatic Reſearches, that ſome veſtiges of Algebraical calculation have been diſcovered among the Brahmins; particularly Rules for the ſolution of certain Arithmetical queſtions, with which it ſhould ſeem that nothing but Algebra could have furniſhed them. Aſiat. Reſearch. ii. p. 468. note, 487. 495.

My friend, Mr. Profeſſor Playfair, has examined that Extract from the Súrya Siddhánta, which gives an account of the ancient Hindoo ſyſtem of Trigonometry, and has diſcovered the principles on which it is founded. It is with pleaſure I announce, that the reſult of this examination will be communicated ſoon to the Public; and will afford an additional proof of the extraordinary progreſs which the natives of India had early made in the moſt abſtruſe ſciences.

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